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NEW STATESMAN

Camp David: bringing war closer?

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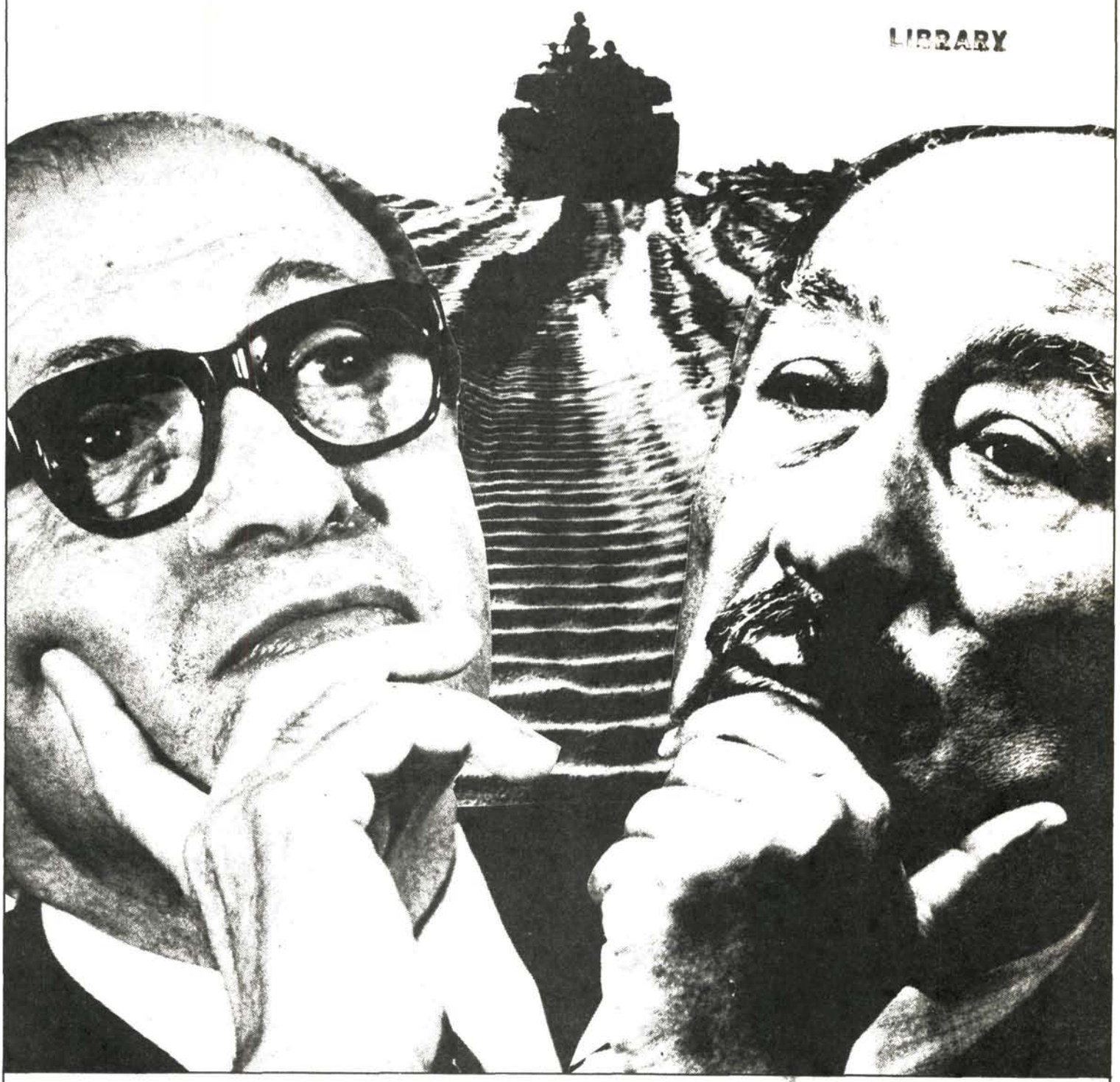

Labour: the shape of defeat/Dunlop punctured

Men only oilrigs

John Bayley: Blok/Ian Hamilton: Priestley

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Trust in princes

The liberal mentality is generally incapable of considering the idea of 'revolution' as a living thing, or of seeing that there are times when ideas, in a celebrated phrase, become a material force. The Cold War, too, has conditioned our commentators in peculiar ways. When the people of a country are in revolt, leader-writers tend to craft grave sentences about the 'strategic importance' of country X, or the value of its revenues to 'our side'. The sweep and speed of events in Iran have exposed the poverty of this view. How ironic it is that the Air Force – which for years was the recipient of all the most lavish American spending and equipment and training – should have become the spearhead of the 'final days'. And how striking it is that the vaunted armed forces in general, drilled and armed for years in loyalty to the Shah, crumbled in 24 hours of street fighting.

It might be too much to expect our Ministry of Defence to develop any reflective capacity, but one likes to think that, as they watch their Chieftain tanks being captured by guerrillas, they regret the million pounds spent on bribing 'Sir' Shapur Reporter to fix the contract. But these sorts of considerations are, like the anxious cost-accounting now being done by BP, fairly marginal and transitory. More important is the question – why do we invariably find ourselves on the wrong side of the barricades?

The NEW STATESMAN was for years virtually alone in condemning the vile Pahlavi regime and warning that sycophancy towards it would lead to disaster. We have also published some less than starry-eyed material about the Ayatollah Khomeini and his fellow Shia revolutionaries. But the general press coverage of the issue has been uncomprehending where it has not been frankly misleading. After all, it is difficult to laud a despot for his 'responsible' and helpful stand over the years, and then suddenly to be obliged to report that he is bitterly hated by the vast majority of his subjects. It might have been instructive to see how *The Times* coped with this sudden turn.

Just over fifty years ago, Leon Trotsky and Bertrand Russell had an exchange on revolution. Russell had adopted the position of a rationalistic pacifist, and also that of a democratic socialist appalled at some of the developments in the USSR. It was to the first of these that Trotsky addressed himself:

> Revolutions are as a rule not made arbitrarily. If it were possible to map out the revolutionary road beforehand and in a rationalistic manner, then it would probably also be possible to avoid revolution altogether . . . Logical arguments, even if Russell turns them into mathematical formulae, are impotent against material interests.

This may seem a rather pitiless method of proceeding, but it serves better than the Burkean horror of those who, whether in 1789, 1916, 1917, or 1979, throw up their hands in dismay at the elemental nature of revolutionary upheaval. Revolutions, viewed historically, are every bit as 'normal' as long periods of tranquillity which intervene. What is *not* normal, but what was done to Iran, is to force a civilised people to live without politics altogether.

Already in Iran, it can be discerned that the 'Islamic Republic' will not be comparable to the pro-American dictatorships of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan (two cases where Western disapproval of Koranic procedure is rather muted at the moment). Iran can be left, for once, to try and determine its own future. But as the caravan moves on we ought to remember that after all those years, with all that money, all those arms, all that 'intelligence' and all those seminars on 'the end of ideology' – many of them sponsored by oil companies and held in Tehran – no cold war diplomat or intellectual now knows anybody in the new Iran by their first name. The point about rationality reasserts itself here. If one is to look at the turbulence coolly, and ask 'what would a rational man choose in such a situation?', the conclusion seems to be that most rational Iranians chose to take the first opportunity to get rid of the Shah.

The most bitter-sweet moment in the unfolding of the whole drama came when President Carter began to bleat that he had been badly informed by the CIA. This was referred to in Administration circles as an 'intelligence failure'. The phrase is a poignant one, if unintentionally so. The failure was one of perception, of not seeing that there were alternatives to dictatorship on the one hand and massive bloodshed on the other. Is it too much to hope that in the future the democratic West will not find itself committed always on the wrong side in the Third World? Or that political leaders owing their own power to election will cease putting their trust in princes?

NOTES

Israel: In for the kill

Claudia Wright writes from Washington: Another of Henry Kissinger's chickens has come home to roost. During his 'Sinai Two' negotiations with Israel in 1975, Kissinger agreed to a provision which stipulated that if Israel became unable to 'meet oil requirements by normal procedures', the United States would come to its aid. Under one heading, the US agreed to provide all the oil Israel might require for purchase if the US itself were not suffering embargos or import restrictions. Under another, the US committed itself to supply Israeli needs according to 'the international energy agency conservation and allocation formula as applied by the United States government'. This is in the contingency of an embargo on Israeli and US supplies simultaneously. The agreement, signed on 1 September 1975, still has eighteen months to run.

In the aftermath of the Iranian oil cut-off, and in the oil panic this has engendered in Washington, the Israelis are now boldly pointing out that Iran used to supply them with two-thirds of their oil, and that the US is now obliged to take up the slack. This is at a time when America is supposed to be asking Israel for concessions on the West Bank. The effect of Kissinger's protocol has not been to make oil a form of pressure by Washington on Tel-Aviv, but the other way about.

The Iranian events also increase the importance of oil in the Sinai. Sadat has been complaining to Carter about Israel's drilling for fresh oil in this area at a time when its return is supposed to be under negotiation. 30,000 barrels a day are coming out of the Alma field – about one fifth of Israel's requirements. By a bizarre coincidence, that is the same figure mentioned in the oil deal between Israel and Mexico – except that so far the Mexicans have refused to sell Israel any more than that. And America's other Middle Eastern oil suppliers have all insisted that none of their oil can be diverted to Israel. Just to complete the tangle, the US is not allowed to sell its new Alaskan crude to foreign buyers. So, with Congress hostile to diverting potential oil supplies abroad at this moment of domestic pressure, the Administration may find itself subsidising Israel to meet the spot prices it will encounter for oil on the open market.

Israeli aid – the largest single appropriation – is due for review by the Senate on 1 March. Recent reports on human rights violations in the occupied territories are being used by Arab lobbyists against renewing the aid programme. Meanwhile, Carter desperately needs a fillip over Camp David, and the Israelis will hardly consider co-operating if they don't get their oil. The fall-out from Iran and the failures of Camp David seem quite intimately linked.

Why Leyland workers struck

Nick Boulter writes: The strike at Leyland's Longbridge plant – which came to an end this week – was caused either by the management breaking a promise or simply by their incompetence in explaining their intentions. The original deal on parity payments between plants, settled back in December, said that plants which had completed their job evaluation exercises and established a grade structure – to be ratified by management by 1 February – would receive an additional sum. But this sum was wholly dependent on productivity.

Before the deal was accepted, the union pressed the management for a definition of the productivity criteria to be used. The management argued that it would be best to leave any definitions as vague as possible in order to get this 'self-funding' deal through the Department of Employment. The unions were told, however, that productivity up to October 1978 was on target, and that with 7,000 voluntary redundancies throughout BL cars it was certain that the new parity and shift allowances could be paid.

The job evaluation committees in each plant worked through December and January in an attempt to complete their task by 1 February. It seemed to the unions that the management, particularly at Longbridge, were delaying the talks by trying to force workers into lower-paid grades; nevertheless some small plants met the February deadline, and the unions asked the company to honour its offer by paying the first stage of parity and shift allowances to these plants. The management, brusquely replying that they 'could not afford payments that have not been earned', introduced a new productivity yardstick of annual 'cars per man' – which the company itself admits is 'at best a crude measure used here for convenience.'

A dispute at Leyland's Drews Lane plant last year, and the road hauliers strike, ensured that the target of 6.6 cars per man could not be met. The Drews Lane dispute was over long before the ballot in December, so the company presumably knew that productivity was down below 4 cars per man in November – and that targets could not therefore be met. Moreover, 'cars per man' is a wholly inappropriate measure of output, since Leyland has been running down the mass-production side while increasing the low volume but high value Jaguar-Rover-Triumph production division.

Housing association choices

Corin Hughes Stanton writes: The convoluted and complicated arrangements for financing housing associations have resulted in social divisiveness between local authority and association tenants. Rents are, on average, 65 per cent higher for housing associations. Now, the annual report of the Housing

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Corporation, responsible for financing many associations and co-operatives, has noted that the 'Fair Rents' which their tenants must pay are often significantly higher than council tenants' 'Reasonable Rents'.

Local authorities usually have between 50 and 100 per cent nomination rights to properties owned by local housing associations. But nomination rights are more often theoretical than real. As the report puts it, the rent level differences 'cause problems when local authorities nominate tenants.' This is a euphemism for saying that some of them can only recommend, from their waiting lists, the better off. Local authorities may have to means test applicants who wish to transfer to housing associations; sometimes they are consequently unable to take their agreed quota.

There is also a class divide, with most housing associations still catering for the professional and middle classes. Housing associations can and do pick and chose their tenants, unlike local authorities. There is therefore a tendency for them to be left with the worst off, those with the greatest social difficulties, and the 'problem families.'

In Greater London, association rents are set at nearly 50 per cent above those of local councils. In Yorkshire and Humberside, association 'Fair Rents' are a staggering 72 per cent or move above council 'Reasonable Rents'. There is no region where the difference is less than 50 per cent. One housing co-operative found that it could not move overcrowded families to rehabilitated maisonettes because they faced 100 per cent rent increases. Elderly single women stay put in large and undecorated dwellings instead of moving into small flats for the same reason. In another part of London, association homes have had to stand empty, until tenants could be found for them only by giving them full supplementary benefits.

Last year housing associations produced 21 per cent of all public sector starts and would have produced more were it not for the slow procedures used, so the rent situation is likely to get worse. This is the second time in two years that the Housing Corporation has drawn attention to the problem. But the House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts (under the chairmanship of Edward du Cann), says that some housing association rents are too low, and wants them increased. It complains that sometimes rent level calculations are up to two years out-of-date and correspondingly too low.

The 'Fair Rent' system has not, as has been claimed, removed association rents from political debate, but puts them plumb in the middle. The 1974 Housing Act now shows signs not of introducing class stratification and re-enforcing the stigma attached to being a council tenant. It has also added to the housing management problems of local authorities.

Open door closed

John Thackara writes: Whether or not he intended to damn with faint praise, T. Benn's plan for *The Times* to be run by the BBC, published last week, fails conspicuously to deal with the corporation's growing intolerance towards criticism of its own output. A 'national institution equally respected at home and abroad' it may be; but the BBC, whose news is the main source of information for a majority of the population, increasingly behaves as if it *were* a private paper.

After a series of disputes over the alleged censorship of drama productions, a row has now broken out over attempts by a group of TV workers, no less, to make an Open Door 'access' programme critical of television's race coverage. *It Ain't Half Racist Mum* was intended by its makers, the Campaign against Racism in the Media, to provide documentary evidence of racist practices and content in a wide variety of output on both channels, from light entertainment to news. Now, the main evidence for the Campaign's programme, extracts from news bulletins monitored and analysed over a one-month period, has been 'withdrawn' following a high-level row at the BBC.

According to BBC minutes of News and Current Affairs meetings in CARM's possession, the decision caused some dissension among defenders of the access principle. But the view prevailed that the BBC will not hand over news film to 'outsiders' without restricting how it can be used. News Editor Alan Protheroe is attributed with the remark: 'If film was made available to the Army, it would be laid down it could only be used, for example, in training. Why should an organisation which might well accuse (myself) and my staff of racism be given privileged treatment?'

CARM complained that the BBC wished to be the sole arbiter of what is good or bad news presentation. Taxed with this problem, Sir Michael Swan wrote to CARM to say that no, news was not immune from criticism, but we are not prepared to release newsfilm to fulfil an avowedly political purpose unless we are reassured about the form and content in which it will be used. The last time the BBC's race policy was attacked in evidence to Annan, they told an Asian group that the BBC believes in the importance of providing airtime for groups who wish to determine content on their own terms, and not on the BBC's.

Special relationships

Duncan Campbell writes: It is always revealing and instructive to look in on ourselves from foreign viewpoints. One of the organisations responsible for assessing the state of Britain today is the United States International Communication Agency (ICA), which is responsible for overseas public

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relations and propaganda work. Last week, we asked the US Embassy to demonstrate open government by showing us the ICA's current 'County Plan' for the UK. They obliged.

The document describes the basis of the 'bilateral communication relationship' between the US and the UK and enumerates projects, such as exchange visits and publicity activity, to foster US objectives. It is cosy reading these hard times for the like of Jim Callaghan: 'Alone among the major powers, the US and Great Britain share the concept of man's place in nature and government's place in the affairs of men which they separately and together believe worthy of preservation and propagation for its own sake'. Noting in passing that Americans often mislabel the UK as 'socialist', the Agency's summary identifies quickly 'the generation now in charge in the UK . . . roughly those in their 40s or above, (who) have their attitudes essentially formed. The special relationship rests safely with them for their term as the Establishment (sic)'.

The problem is, however, the 'survival and vigour of the special relationship into the successor generation . . . whose inclination – unlike that of their parents – is not to give the US the benefit of the doubt . . . principle or process about which they know so little.'

But this generation is not lost, and 'a more pluralistic, more egalitarian, possibly isolationist Britain will continue to share and enforce our common values.'

The Country Plan, written by Embassy Public Affairs Counsellor Burnett Anderson, is prepared for the ICA office in Washington to approve budgets. There is no connection with the CIA, despite the unfortunate similarity of titles. But the CIA's propaganda plans could never quite express themselves in the way the ICA does: 'The common language (and other features) provide all that multitude of majestic channels and miscellaneous rills over which fly the guidon of the special relationship (which) have created a wealth and variety and depth of bilateral communications among the major powers for which the rest of the world has neither precedent or parallel.'

On the dole in the Isles

Ron McKay writes: A party of European MPs visited Inverness last week to report on the continuing unemployment problems in the Scottish Highlands – one of the worst-hit regions of the EEC. The unemployment rate in the Highland Region is 10.7 per cent compared with 6.1 per cent in the UK as a whole. But this figure masks some horrifying blackspots, like Kyle of Lochalsh where 21.1 per cent of the adult population are on the dole and the Western Isles, with 18 per cent of men on the dole.

The reasons for the return of traditional high-level unemployment are the continuing slump in North Sea oil activity and the end, in December last year, of the Job Creation Programme. The Loch Wishorn platform construction yard awaits an order since the completion last year of a rig for the Maureen field and the new government programme which replaces Job Creation – the Short Term Employment Programme – specifically excludes those who have worked on JCP.

Roger Howarth, the Director of Development for the Western Isles Council, points out the Catch 22 nature of the new programme. 'Under Job Creation we got the unemployment rate down to 6 per cent which was below the national average. Under JCP virtually everyone qualified. But under STEP only those who have been unemployed for six months if they are under 25, or a year if they are over, qualify. That obviously rules out those who worked on JCP' – most of the unemployed.'

The council, says Howarth, is now trying to concentrate on 'local resources rather than attract footloose industry.' Fishing is high on the agenda. Funding will come from both the United Kingdom government and the EEC's regional development fund. 'The problem with the EEC grant' says Howarth, 'is that it goes through Westminster, and we end up with about 82½ per cent of what was granted.'

The return of double figure unemployment and its historical partner, emigration, will doubtless be seized on by the routed SNP both in the run-up to the referendum and in a subsequent Assembly.

Past times of the Duke

Badalia Herodsfoot writes: A recently unearthed account of the activities of 'Duke' Hussey – the management representative responsible for the *Times* dispute, now in its third month – illustrates the curiosity of Hussey's claim to be protagonist of a rational newspaper system. It also sheds a little light on the troubles at the *Evening News*.

In 1970, Hussey was managing director of the *Daily Mail* group, Associated Newspapers. He got together with Mr John Coote, managing director of the Beaverbrook group, to discuss a scheme which seemed likely to produce the most profitable newspaper operations in Britain.

The idea was to merge the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Express* in order to produce a national morning newspaper which would, in theory, span the advertising market from top to bottom. The projected joint sale was four million. Pagination would go up to 40 pages to deal with a flood of advertising. In evening papers, the prospects were even more delectable. They planned to merge the *Standard* and the *News*, creating thereby a monopoly paper capable of producing £6 million a year in profits. They expected trouble from the unions, but believed that a tough management could win the day.

A further attraction was that when all promotion had been transferred to Beaverbrook's new premises, Associated would be able to sell off property, and cash in on the property boom. The secret negotiations covering the evening papers carried the code-name 'Quags' (from Quaglino's restaurant); the other scheme was code-named 'Cavendish'.

Hussey and Coote both appointed working-parties to study the strategies, Hussey's headed by a bright young Associated executive, Michael Mander – now group advertising boss at the *Times*.

The deal seemed a certainty, despite meaning the death of two newspapers. But it collapsed before it became public, at the hands of other disgruntled executives.

Many of the same players, of course, are still in the game. Reporters might do worse than watch the comings and goings at Quag's.

POLITICS

Labour after a defeat: who will suffer most?

Patrick Wintour writes: It is very hard at the moment to keep the minds of Labour MPs off the coming deluge. The feeling is that their fate rests on three factors. If this Wednesday's concordat with the TUC fails to convince, if the industrial disputes over pay continue through the Spring, and if the Government loses the support of the nationalists after the March referenda, then it is probable that Callaghan would be forced into an election where Labour would be smothered under the kind of landslide detailed in MORI's poll last week. The only escape route will be courtesy of the Ulster Unionists.

However, if the election does come early and the Labour vote collapses is there any evidence that the Left or the Right of the Party would come off worse? There has been some disloyal talk recently that the Labour Left might now be calculating that they might benefit from a defeat that could be blamed on Callaghan and the Right of the Party. The special significance of the effect on Left and Right of the heavy party defeat is that Callaghan would certainly resign and a leadership contest would ensue. Under the present rules the Parliamentary Labour Party exclusively elects the Party leader.

If the Labour Left is quietly thinking to itself along these lines, then it had better think again. The evidence is that the Tribunites are concentrated in Labour's marginal seats. A five per cent swing to the Tories based on October 1974 would, if reproduced across the country, hand just about 57 seats to the Tories. If the swing was nearer to the 10 per cent the MORI poll suggests the Tories would pick up nearer 120 Labour seats. The lower percentage swing seems to be more likely. In that instance 24 left wingers would lose their seats, 17 centrists and 15 right wingers. (The political classification is based on the Party's voting record during seven major anti-government rebellions, the Tribune group list and necessarily subjective political soundings.) Amongst those likely to fall are Brian Gould, Helene Hayman, Ron Thomas, Max Madden, Frank Judd, Audrey Wise, Maureen Colquhoun, Hugh Jenkins, Alex Lyon, Jeff Rooker, Bob Cryer, Phillip Whitehead and Alan Williams. David Owen with a 6.2 per cent majority over the Tories in Plymouth (ie vulnerable roughly to a 3 per cent swing) is the only senior Minister besides Judith Hart who faces defeat. Owen's future rests largely on the National Front vote and Judith Hart's on the fate of the SNP.

If the MORI poll is still accurate at the election time then Shirley Williams (14.4 per cent majority), Joel Barnett (13.2), Albert Booth (17.5), and Tony Benn (17.7) are all vulnerable. The three contestants for the leadership who are assured of staying in Westminster are Healey, Hattersley and Shore. The latter represents Stepney and Poplar, the third safest Labour constituency in Britain.

The complexion of the party will also be changed by the replacement of 40 retiring Labour MPs with new blood. One of the great right-wing myths, recently trotted out in the *Evening Standard* by the political columnist of the *Spectator*, Ferdinand Mount, is that young Marxists are replacing the old generation of 1945 Labour moderates. Though the Left may have gained four or five supporters net, and notably figures like Barry Sherman, Tony Banks, Stuart Holland, Reg Race and Ernie Roberts, the remarkable feature is the extent to which selection committees have stayed with the politics of their previous candidate. Nor has the proportion of trade union candidates decreased.

In short, the Labour Left's immediate future depends firmly on nailing their flag on Callaghan's mast.

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PAKISTAN
Lawrence Lifschultz

How Zulfikar Ali Bhutto became a symbol of democracy

Condemned by 'Rule of Law'

THE MOST significant phase of Bhutto's grim drama began just over a decade ago. Having cut his political teeth in the cabinet of Pakistan's first military dictator, Field Marshall Ayub Khan, he was sacked over what he later alleged were differences with Ayub's 'sell-out' in Kashmir, and in December 1967 founded his Pakistan's People's Party (PPP).

In November 1968 massive student and working class agitations erupted against the Ayub regime. By mid-November the authorities had arrested Bhutto and Wali Khan, the leader of the social democratic National Awami Party (NAP), while in East Pakistan, Mujibur Rahman of the Awami League was already in prison and awaiting trial for treason.

The next three months saw street scenes reminiscent of Iran today. By mid-February 1969, Ayub was forced out by more junior generals, who under General Yahya Khan declared themselves a provisional government and agreed to hold national elections in December 1970. Bhutto, Mujib and Wali were released. In the elections, Mujib's Awami League won an overwhelming majority in East Pakistan on a platform of regional autonomy. Bhutto's PPP came in with majorities in West Pakistan, in the re-established provinces of the Punjab and Sindh, while Wali Khan's NAP took control in Baluchistan and the Frontier. Overall, the results in the new National Assembly brought the Awami League a majority – which meant Mujib would be Pakistan's new Prime Minister when the Assembly convened in March 1971.

Bhutto's role was crucial in the ensuing tragedy. Suddenly adopting the posture of national chauvinism, he declared his party would boycott the National Assembly unless Mujib abandoned his programme of provincial autonomy. Mujib refused. Playing on the prejudices of the Punjabi dominated army, Bhutto warned that if Mujib became Prime Minister it would mean the end of West Pakistan's dominant and lucrative privileges within the federation.

His critics say it was his ambition to be Prime Minister no matter what the cost. After nine months of civil and international war, a million deaths and several millions turned into refugees, that is precisely what happened. Bhutto assumed power in Pakistan and Mujib took over in Bangladesh.

In the period that followed, Bhutto gained some credibility as an international figure and a popular personality within Pakistan. He decreed substantial wage increases for organised sections of the working class and pushed forward a nationalisation programme against Pakistan's 'Twenty-Two Families' of capitalist finance. Land reform measures, which at first glance seemed to have some genuine potential, were also declared – despite Bhutto's own vast feudal landholdings in Sindh.

On the constitutional front, the PPP and Wali Khan's NAP exhibited extraordinary co-operation and drafted a document which contained without question the most democratic set of political guarantees and recognition of provincial rights the country had ever known. With the army chastened after the Bangladesh defeat, there seemed at last some real hope that the era of military dictatorships was over. But these dreams were to last only a year.

THE MAIN PROBLEMS emerged in Baluchistan, the country's western-most province which runs along Iran's entire eastern border and covers 40 per cent of Pakistan's land area. The Shah was noticeably restless with an elected social democratic government in the province on his eastern flank. He had considered the NAP pro-Soviet ever since it opposed Pakistan's inclusion into America's grand regional military alliances, CENTO/SEATO. The Shah told Bhutto he did not want the NAP in power in Baluchistan.

Iran was emerging as the main financial donor to Pakistan's debt-ridden economy and in 1974, for the first time, was to surpass the Americans as the main factor underpinning the regime's insolvency. In desperate need of foreign exchange and with grand hopes of becoming an integral element in the Shah's even grander dreams of a Persian-style Co-Prosperity Sphere, Bhutto obliged. He dismissed the elected provincial authorities in February 1973 and eventually arrested the leaders of the Baluchistan NAP. The tough tribal supporters of the Baluch provincial government went into the rugged hills around Quetta, the province capital, and began one of the fiercest and least reported wars in Asia. It lasted four years, until General Zia ul Huq's *coup d'etat* removed Bhutto in 1977. Meanwhile, in 1975, Bhutto banned the NAP as 'anti-national' and imprisoned what was left of its leadership, including Wali Khan.

Within his own party, Bhutto faced growing dissent, not only over Baluchistan, but also over his retreat from the more progressive aspects of the PPP's programme. By 1976, half of the PPP's original Central Committee's members (mainly the party's left wing) had either resigned or been run out of the organisation. Its popular base had been reduced to a shell. J. A. Rahim, a man Bhutto once called his 'mentor', who became a cabinet member and author of the PPP's manifesto, was nearly beaten to death by members of the Federal Security Force after a personal argument with Bhutto. Another of Bhutto's most militant supporters, trade unionist Mairaj Mhd. Khan, resigned from the cabinet over Baluchistan and the growing suppression of industrial strikes. Like many others he landed in jail. At lower levels there were numerous stories of arrests and detentions without trial. Added to this came the closing of newspapers critical of the government and of literate political journals such as *Outlook* in Karachi. Then came reports such as that of Khwaja Rahman, publisher of the daily newspaper *Dawn*, being shot in the back. Fears grew of official hit squads operating, more or less on their own licence, against 'enemies of the state'.

NOW BHUTTO SITS OUT what may be his last hours, in a Rawalpindi jail, sentenced to death by Pakistan's newest dictatorship. The leading government witness against him was a Masood Mahmood, Director General of Bhutto's now disbanded Federal Security Force, who was promised his life in exchange for his testimony. During the Ayub regime, Mahmood was dimissed from the police service after two university students fell several storeys to their deaths, following a police interrogation session. It is a poignant comment on Bhutto that he should have rehabilitated Mahmood to head his personal paramilitary force. Mahmood's own history is a reflection on the integrity of his evidence against his former master.

The judgement on Bhutto's appeal was split 4-3 against him. One of the dissenting judges, Durab Patel, pointed out that the prosecution

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failed to corroborate the testimony of the two police officers who gave evidence against Bhutto; in the strictest legal sense, said Patel, the evidence was equivocal – making Bhutto's direct involvement in the Kasuri shooting 'reasonably capable of innocent interpretation'. As Amnesty International says 'the evidence on which Mr Bhutto was convicted was based almost entirely on the statement of alleged accomplices'.

General Zia tells the world that he has restored the 'Rule of Law' to Pakistan. On 22 March last year, three men were hanged in public outside the Camp Jail at Lahore – the first such executions of civilians under military law. There has also been much to do about flogging and hand chopping. This is all possible because in restoring the 'Rule of Law', the junta has declared the constitution 'in abeyance'.

Pakistan's Supreme Court, which does not have a laudable record for independent judgement, declared on 10 November 1977 that the army's takeover, although 'extra-constitutional' was nevertheless a 'valid assumption of power', by virtue of the 'law of necessity'. Just where the 'law of expediency' falls in relation to the 'law of necessity', the Supreme Court did not say.

The fact that there is now, in certain parts of Pakistan, a genuine revival of support for Bhutto as a symbol of democracy has less to do with Bhutto's own achievements than with the reputation of the present regime. Anti-militarist and democratic sentiment is deep and widespread. For many of Bhutto's early and most active supporters, it is a difficult and anguished turn to rally around him now: there have been too many betrayals and disappointments in the past. Nevertheless, the consequence of not opposing a political execution, which is being carried out under the guise of such flimsy legality, would be dire. If a stand is not taken, it is feared the junta will slide even further towards the police state methods of Videla's Argentina.

Lawrence Lifschultz was South Asia Correspondent for the Far Eastern Economic Review.

EMPLOYMENT
Anna Coote

Why are women barred from Britain's oilrigs?

Fear of frilly nighties

TWO YOUNG GEOLOGISTS working on North Sea explorations for the British National Oil Company were alarmed to find, in September last year, that their names had been removed from the well-site duty rota. They had been due to take their turn with the other geologists, working on the rigs for about ten weeks in a year. The job description they had been given made it clear that offshore duty was an essential part of their work:

> From time to time a geologist will be responsible for monitoring the drilling of a well at the well-site, including continuous sample logging and use of gas detection equipment. He will also, in conjunction with the Drilling Supervisor, pick coring points and instruct the drilling personnel on the taking of cores and when to run wireline logs . . .

Apparently it was a matter of monumental importance that had caused their names to be removed. A memorandum accompanying the original rota (which still included them) stressed that it 'should be regarded as inviolate and . . . (could) only be changed in the direst emergency'. Dire it was, though hardly an emergency. The company's Operations Department had decided that women should not go offshore.

The day after she was removed from the rota, one of the geologists telephoned the Operations Department, demanding an explanation. She was told (and she recorded the conversation at the time) that there were four reasons why women were not allowed offshore. First 'occasionally male crew members walk down corridors on the rig with no clothes on and may be observed by any females present.' Second, 'a crane driver, for example, may be distracted by the sight of a female geologist walking about the rig and the resultant lack of concentration may cause an accident'. Third, 'the wives of men working offshore may object to the presence of women offshore and force their husbands to change jobs'. And fourth, 'the contractors of the rig may object to the presence of females on their rig.' Geologists, it should be noted, are not inclined to flit around oilrigs in frilly nighties, or spend their time flirting with welders: they wear overalls and helmets and work 12 hour shifts like everyone else.

The two women (they do not want their names published) complained of unfair discrimination to BNOC's Exploration Co-ordinator, three months earlier. At the time, they had worked for the company for six and twelve months respectively, but had been allowed offshore for only one week. Before they left the Aberdeen office for the Atlantic 1 Drilling Rig, they were given the firm impression that their visit was frowned upon and they would be regarded as a liability on the rig. As they pointed out, their subsequent experience made nonsense of the managers' fears:

> We met with no adverse reactions, no problems, no accidents. The Atlantic 1 has had female personnel working offshore when drilling for Elf (among other companies). The rig has at least four double cabins containing a W.C. and a shower . . .

They have not been allowed on the rigs again. Since offshore experience is such an important part of training, the women are in no doubt that their promotion prospects are being damaged. They have asked to be put back on the rota, but so far the company has done nothing but procrastinate. Senior staff have had to be drafted in to make up for a shortage of qualified men available for well-site duty.

MEANWHILE, A YOUNG planning analyst working for Shell has encountered a similar problem. Elaine Prior, a 24-year-old chemistry graduate, is based in London with the company's Field Pipeline Project Team. Her job is to plan and monitor the activities of vessels which lay pipelines to the platforms in the North Sea, in order to maximise their efficiency. Her job description stipulates that she should have a 'good working knowledge of offshore equipment and pipelining techniques'. Male members of the team have spent some weeks on the vessels, and even the accountant has been offshore for several days. But not Elaine. As she explained: 'I have to know about the anchor patterns of vessels working near the platforms – whether they can lie on adjacent sides, for instance, or how quickly they can pull away in an emergency. I have to liaise with people in Aberdeen and give instruction. Without first-hand experience I am at a real disadvantage.'

Shell have allowed Elaine to spend two days looking around the oil terminal in Shetland and 36 hours on the ferry which takes crews to and from the vessels. On the latter visit, she managed to get on to a helicopter and touch down for two hours on a diving support vessel. Nothing untoward happened, but she was told afterwards that if she were to stay any longer 'something might develop'. On another occasion she tried to arrange a visit to a pipelay barge, but was told it would not be a good idea: there were several welders from Houston on board and her presence might make them go on strike, as they would miss their wives. (The managers who made the prediction attribute such behaviour to the labouring classes only.)

The Sex Discrimination Act would appear to offer all three women a remedy. The geologists are still trying to negotiate a settlement with BNOC, but Elaine Prior has filed her complaint with an industrial tribunal. Earlier, she wrote to her MP, Reg Freeson, and received through him an intriguing reply from Dickson Mabon, Minister of State at the Energy Department. 'The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 does not apply at present to offshore employment,' he said, 'and will not apply until such time as an Order in Council is made under Section 10(5).' Tony Benn could make such an Order any time he wanted to, and the sooner the better. But as far as these women are concerned, Mabon's point is irrelevant: The Act does not apply to employees whose work is done *wholly or mainly outside* Great Britain, but the majority of their work is done in their offices, *inside* Britain.

Mabon claimed in the same letter that BNOC lays on 'regular operational trips on seismic vessels for their female geologists' – a privilege which has escaped the notice of the two female geologists who work for that company.

Neither case presents any real difficulty in finding suitable accommodation for the women. As Elaine points out, a company which spends tens of thousands of pounds a day to keep one vessel afloat could afford a few quid to put up a 'Ladies' sign and replace a shower curtain with a solid door. (She has researched the problem thoroughly, and nothing else seems necessary.)

Shell are preparing to argue that, though they have treated Elaine differently from men, they have not treated her less favourably. It will be up to the tribunal to decide who is right on that score.

Elaine Prior's union, ASTMS, is backing her. It will be an important test case – and the first to challenge this extraordinary reluctance to allow women to work offshore. It's an obsession not shared by other countries. A report in the *Scotsman* recently revealed that a Norwegian rig had 300 women on board.

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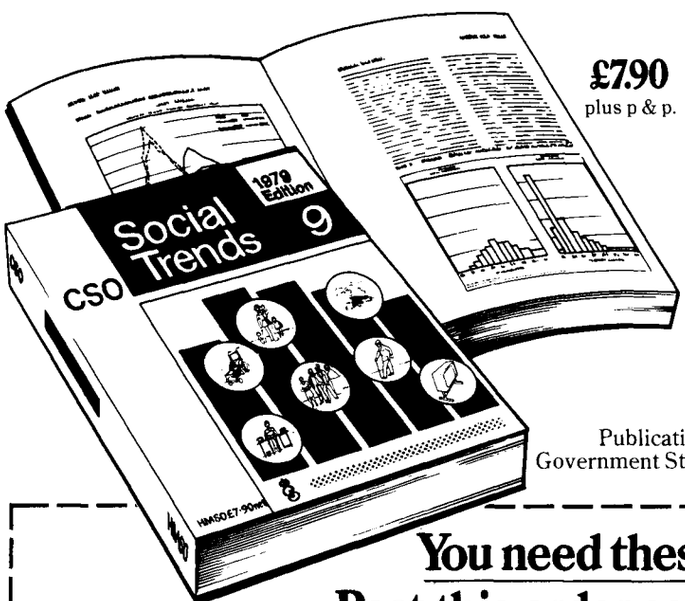

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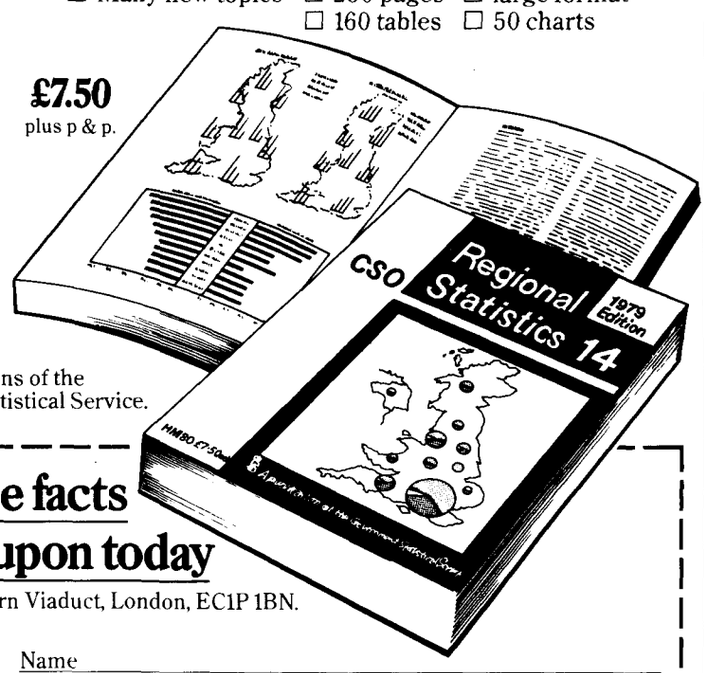

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CAMP DAVID

The painful death of an illusion

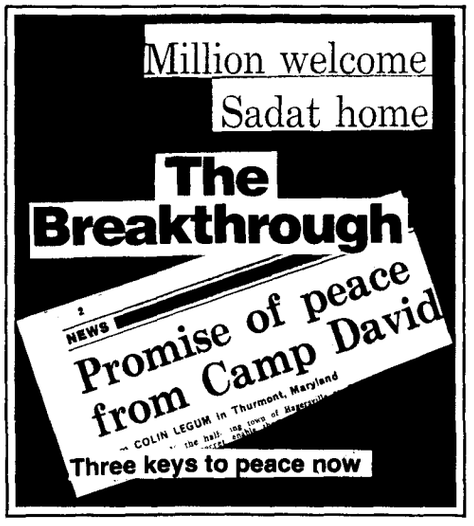
As the Camp David accords begin to unravel, the mystery is not why they are failing but how they have even endured this long. On the long view, it looks as if positions are being taken up for the next war. CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS examines what went wrong, and how world opinion was misled.

THE CAMP DAVID MYSTIQUE SEEMS to have become a matter of diminishing returns. A few days ago, it was reported that Egyptian leaders want another full-dress 'summit' at which to discuss the insuperable problem of Palestine versus Israel. It is important to remember that this difference between Cairo and Tel-Aviv has not 'emerged' during negotiations; rather it was there all along and simply, insistently, reasserts itself at every turn. Even during a relatively brief stay in Cairo, at a time when Sadat's regime was turninng more fiercely against internal critics, it was possible to make out that point very clearly. Now, if there is another summit, and if Carter and his team can spare the time from wooing Peking to sponsor one, is it even conceivable that a similar media and public reaction could be mounted for what is efffectively round three of the same old round one? Clearly not. Why then, were we drenched in such uncritical hype at the time of the first and the second? Some saw danger signals in the fact that Camp David was the only Carter policy with which Henry Kissinger has publicly agreed, and others have learned to distrust the planeload of 'experts' who jet from throne to throne extolling the 'statesmanship' of this or that mediocrity or despot. Now it is beginning to look as if Camp David has actually *destabilised* the Middle East, and all the sycophantic words and pictures of 'last year in Jerusalem' are turning a shade yellow at the edges.

Still, in spite of all the froth, two things have become clearer. The first is that Camp David's chief result has been, not to bring Egypt closer to Israel, but to drive Egypt and the Arabs further apart. This obvious and pregnant fact was obscured by the way in which the press habitually treated Israel as somehow the navel of the Middle East; almost as a part of the Western alliance. The second perception to emerge is that the original doubters were not and are not war-lovers (as many people writing in to us have implied). We just didn't believe in a cobbled-up 'linkage' which has more to do with Presidential popularity scores and second-term voting calculations than with a just peace among the Semitic peoples. It was in another tale of two cities that Charles Dickens described the Dover Mail, in terms exactly suited to Camp David, as being:

> in its usual genial position that the guard suspected the passengers, the passengers suspected one another and the guard, they all suspected everybody else, and the coachman was sure of nothing but the horses; as to which cattle he could with a clear conscience have taken his oath on the two Testaments that they were not fit for the journey.

Surveyed even from the position of Carter (the coachman) and Vance (the guard) the two cattle are indeed a sorry pair, and the passengers justifiably apprehensive. Mr Begin has been getting most of the obloquy of late, for his 'inexplicable' (to some) 'intransigence' over the West Bank and Gaza. Meanwhile Sadat picked up most of the Nobel Prize



kudos (and in this, their predecessors Henry Kissinger and Le Duc Tho can be thanked for pointing the way to 'peace'). But in fact, both men are making the same two mistakes. The first is to suppose that Egypt can recover the Sinai with its oil, and Israel retain the West Bank with its inhabitants without anybody really noticing (and that *is* the deal). The second is to pin their faith on an American hegemony in the region which, in every other respect, is openly on the retreat. Even if the leaders eventually sign, which they may yet do, these two weaknesses will only become more evident.

IT COULD NOT BE PUT more bluntly than Begin put it, as quoted in the Israeli paper *Haaretz* last 27 September. He boasted that:

> If the administrative council of the autonomous region one day announces the setting up of an independent Palestinian state, it will be its first and last act. We shall go in and dissuade them.

He added a few days later, this time to the Israeli paper *Maariv*, that:

> No Palestinian state will be set up. None. The Israeli army will be there to stop it. It's not by chance that the council will have the name 'Administrative Council' . . . We have proposed autonomy and not sovereignty and there is an enormous difference between the two.

General Dayan, then, was probably not joking when he said, at a Cabinet meeting last December:

> If the Egyptians knew Israeli intentions about this they would not sign the treaty.[1]

Of course, in any known dictionary the definitions of 'autonomy' and of 'sovereignty' are a very slight distance apart. This linguistic fact is also a depressing one, because it enables both sides to claim that they are justified *by the letter* in violating or ignoring a protocol that both have theoretically signed. At the very core of the Camp David treaty is an attempt to do with language what cannot be done in reality – abolish the Palestinian problem.

Such an obdurate and evasive policy (on what should be termed self-determination) has become an emblem; the very heart of the matter. It explains the growing civilian revolt in the occupied territories, with mass meetings and rallies on a scale not seen since the June war. In recent weeks, all the leading mayors and political figures of the Arab West Bank have reiterated their repudiation of Camp David and their adherence to the PLO. The mayor of Gaza has written to Sadat begging him not to sign the treaty with Israel. The students of the Arab universities in Israel have openly sent messages of solidarity to the 'Baghdad summit' of Arab nations opposed to the treaty. This in turn explains why Israel will not treat with or recognise the PLO, and thus further stalls the talks. It explains the mushroom growth of the 'Peace Now' movement in Israel itself, where serving officers in uniform have joined and addressed huge crowds who shout Ben-Gurion's old dictum that 'peace is more important than real estate', and oppose Begin's crazy policy of continuing to settle Arab lands.

It also explains why even the Saudis, let alone the Jordanians, will not join Sadat's 'peace process' or abandon Jerusalem and the Palestinians. It explains why Israel will not announce a date even for the 'autonomy' elections, and will not accept the Egyptian proposal for a trial run election in the Gaza strip. And it explains why the Egyptians, desperate as they are for a success in the talks, cannot concede much more than they have already.

Professor Yorah Dimstein, dean of law at Tel-Aviv University, put it rather well recently when he satirised the Israeli attitude to Sadat as translating thus:

> You said what you meant but we didn't believe you meant what you said and now we see that you did mean what you said, so why did you lie to us?

Such a sprawling delta of failures and contradictions does flow out of a mainstream problem. The second great weakness of the Camp David duo is their joint dependence on Washington. It would not be an exaggeration to say that both Israel and Egypt now regard themselves as the main friend and defender of American interests in the region following the Iranian insurrection. Both propose themselves as respectively indispensable, both argue that America should 'pressure' the other.

This sibling rivalry is not an ideal recipe for a stable settlement, and no amount of joint praying will make it so – especially as the parent power is gradually losing its ability to determine and manipulate events.

THE MOST NOTABLE RESULT of the 'accord' so far has not been the vaunted 'linkage' between Sinai withdrawal and progress on the West Bank. To the contrary, it has been the unprecedented unity of the Arab world against Sadat. Even his friends in Saudi Arabia, now additionally nervous as a result of the swing to the PLO in Tehran, have aligned themselves tentatively with the 'rejection front'. Sadat would have had to pass two

[1] See Ammon Kapeliouk's important article in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, January 1979.

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tests in order to call his initiative an Arab success. He would have had to keep the Saudis and the Jordanians at least neutral, and he would have had to keep the 'hard line' opposition states in their habitual state of division. What has he got instead? Strong Jordanian opposition, distinct Saudi scepticism and, unprecedentedly, a move towards the actual political and military integration of Syria and Iraq! These last two countries have been murderous rivals for years, on grounds of religion as much as politics, and their public reconciliation, effectively undoing the old Sykes-Picot agreement, is at least as remarkable as Camp David itself. These four countries, then, form the corners of a fairly solid, rich and well-armed bloc which supports the Palestinian cause, from different positions but almost without reservation. The only shred of comfort for Sadat is that the Saudis, by being in the bloc, can exert a restraining influence upon it. But he rather devalued this card by denouncing the sheikhs and princelings of Ryadh as 'allies of Communism' – arguably his most crass press campaign to date.

As for the Jordanians, it must be significant that, while they fear the PLO almost as much as Israel does, they have resisted all overtures from Carter to join the 'peace process'. The old British-sponsored Baghdad Pact, of course, began in Jordan but eventually Hussein was too prudent to actually join that doomed alliance. For all that radicals denounce the Hashemite regime as 'artificial', it has been a durable and quite accurate weathervane in the region, and its abstention from this deal (not to mention its alliance with the new, militant 'Baghdad Pact') must trouble Sadat a great deal.

The final destabilisation inflicted on the Middle East by Camp David is in the area of relations between the superpowers. Up until recently, there had been broad agreement between them on something approaching UN resolution 242. Hollow though the resolution was, it provided a faint consensus. Now, with the polarisation between Egypt and the rest of the Arabs, the USSR is unlikely to resist the temptation of offering strong support to the emerging Baghdad alliance and thus recouping some of its many losses in the area since 1970. Which leaves America, now shorn of Iran, stuck with Begin.

Begin, indeed, has been receiving the brunt of international criticism lately. His unattractive mixture of messianism and chauvinism certainly entitles him to wide condemnation. But it would be a mistake to contrast Sadat too favourably.

FOR YEARS AFTER HIS succession to Nasser, Sadat seemed content to run a fairly mediocre show, letting Egypt go to hell in its own way and not inflicting himself too much on the populace. Since 1973, something seems to have come over him. All the signs are there in Cairo; more and bigger pictures of the great man, and less and less freedom to mock or criticise his behavior or his politics. A sort of petulance seems to have descended on him, as in the case of his crazed attack on Cyprus last year, or his order to storm the Bulgarian Embassy a few weeks ago because of some petty feud. He once told the NEW STATESMAN, puffing on his pipe the while, that the food rioters in Cairo in January 1977 were 'riff raff'. In his pompous new volume of memoirs *In Search Of Identity*[2] he says:

Nothing much to smile about. Three men who can control the media better than events. *Camera Press*

> This is the story of my life, which is at the same time the story of Egypt since 1918 – for so destiny has decreed.

He has rather revamped his earlier memoirs, *Revolt on the Nile*, especially as regards the reputation and role of Nasser. (And he has slightly toned down the emphasis on his period as a Nazi agent during the war.)

Sadat's dislike of criticism, and his related love affair with the United States, has had a variety of consequences which are significant for Camp David as well as for Egypt's internal politics. Three vignettes from the recent past will illustrate his difficulties.

Item. When Begin was being difficult over settlements last autumn, the official Egyptian press fell out of love with him and started calling him 'Shylock'. This gross anti-semitism (perpetrated particularly by Mustapha Amin of *Al-Akhbar*) is also directed at the Egyptian Left, which has always had a large proportion of Jewish people in its ranks (the Egyptian Communist party, for instance, having been founded by one). Those impressed by Sadat's praying in Jerusalem should bear this crudity in mind.

Item. In 1976 there appeared a book entitled *After the Guns Fall Silent*, by Mohammed Sid-Ahmed. He is one of the foremost Egyptian intellectuals and in the book he proposed, from a socialist point of view, a 'dialogue' in the Middle East and an end to the war mentality. At the time, he was attacked by Sadat's minions for belittling the 'achievements' of the 1973 October 'triumph' at the Suez canal. And over the last year he has been banned and prosecuted for his opposition to Camp David, because he regards this version of 'peace' as a sell-out and a blunder.

Item. Last month, there were protests in Cairo against Sadat's playing host to the Shah of Iran. Those responsible for the protests – chiefly the Progressive National Unionist Party – saw their presses closed, their papers confiscated and some of their comrades taken by the police.

The fact that this all took place on Nasser's birthday only reminded a wider public of Egypt's new client relationship with the Americans. Sadat's most recent offer, to shelter the endangered American F-14s trapped in Iran by the revolution, only shows that sycophants just naturally don't know when to stop.

The sad thing is that he has got so little in return for it. It's only a short time since he asked, rather plaintively, for a 'Carter Plan' for Egypt that would match the Marshall Plan for Europe. So far, no sign of anything quite like that. In fact, Sadat is having still to deal mainly with the IMF, whose terms include cuts in the subsidy (on food and other staples) on which most Egyptians virtually depend. Surrounded as Sadat is by an entourage of *nouveaux riches* – like the famous contractor Osman Ahmed Osman – many of whom are related to him by marriage, he can insulate himself from this kind of pressure on the internal front. And it would be absurd to deny that there is still quite some euphoria among the people about the prospect of 'peace'. He will only have to worry seriously about domestic trouble when this prospect is seen to be illusory, and aroused expectations start to turn sour.

Perhaps by way of insurance against such an evil day, Sadat recently offered himself to the Americans as 'your Cuba in Africa'. Even the most hawkish of his Congressional visitors were slightly taken aback at his eagerness to please, and it will obviously take time before the concept of 'Egyptian military advisors' is enough to strike terror into the African revolution (let alone the Cuban one). But the offer is there, and there have been scattered occasions, such as the attack on Libya in 1977, when Sadat has shown himself able and willing to use military muscle as a means of impressing Washington. Recently, he has gone so far as to talk about 'the unity of the three monotheistic religions against atheism', which is at least a novel idea but one which depresses the cosmopolitan and secular elements in Egyptian society – who have already seen their once-flourishing press turned into a vehicle of mediocrity and conformism.

One of the former stars of that press,

[2] Collins £6.50

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Mohammed Heykal, is still in Cairo living on the margins of official disapproval and restriction. When I called on him recently, he expressed the fear that Camp David might actually bring the next war a little closer. His reasoning runs like this. With Israel still inflexible on the main points, and Egypt increasingly deprived of the Arab funds which it hoped to attract through its cockroach capitalist 'open door' policy, the strain may become intolerable. Given the volatile character of Sadat, and the narrow basis of his regime, he (and it) may want and need to get back into the Arab family rather rapidly. This may require some grand gesture. What might that grand gesture be? The Sinai peninsula could be soaking up yet more blood sooner than people think.

Timing here is hard to be precise about, but Heykal takes the view that a treaty-signing (which he still feels to be likely) would only intensify the same process. Exactly because of Sadat's instability, Begin must extract *irreversible* concessions from him. And, exactly because of his own vulnerability, irreversible concessions are just what Sadat cannot in the long run afford to make.

This is, of course, speculative and conversational and slightly alarmist. But again, it should be borne in mind that Heykal is no warmonger, and favoured direct negotiations immediately after the 1973 war, when they might have stood a chance of success. Sadat, instead, opted for the 'step by step' method, and then for the dash to Jerusalem, and we have now reached a point when Camp David is itself hardly more than a new version of the 'step by step' routine.

THE POSITION, FINALLY, seems to be this. Camp David inspired hopes which it could not possibly have satisfied even on optimum conditions. Since that time, the Israelis have made it clear that they regard the Old Testament as a bargaining position, and that Bantustans are the best the Palestinians can hope for (would Israel have accepted a West Bank state for Jews on these terms?). The Baghdad summit has put every significant Arab country on the other side. The Iranian insurgency has both weakened American influence in the region beyond repair and enhanced the dependence of Israel and Egypt on this same declining influence – chiefly but not wholly because of oil. The PLO has if anything tightened its hold on the Palestinians and the Arabs living under occupation – and the more important it becomes to recognise it, the less the Israelis are inclined to do so. Sadat, meanwhile, has isolated himself in the Arab world and somewhat lost his place in the affections of his own people. The Middle East, in short, is more polycentric and less subject to manipulation – which has still not prevented the Camp David accords from raising the temperature between Washington and Moscow. It is not an impressive record, and there is no pleasure in setting it down. But as Mohammed Heykal put it to me: 'You can change anything except geography and history'. There is plenty of both in Judaea and Samaria, and, alas, the Carter-Begin-Sadat trio are not men of sufficient stature even to attempt such a task.

EDUCATION

Campaign to end the cane

DESPITE THE CONTINUED FAILURE of the Private Member's Bill to ban corporal punishment on handicapped and deprived children, this year could still see the end of such beatings. For the unexpected result of the Bill's jerky passage through the Commons has been to reveal much greater support for abolition than had previously been realised. It has even led to speculation that the political and public climate may soon be right for a complete ban on the cane in Britain's schools.

After the first defeat of the Bill's second reading on 19 January, its sponsor Bruce Grocott put down an early day motion calling on Shirley Williams to ban the cane forthwith in special schools. A ministerial directive is all that is required – one from the Education Secretary for special schools, one from the Social Services Secretary for community homes. Grocott collected some 80 signatures, mainly from Labour backbenchers, 'without really trying' for this piece of parliamentary graffiti.

Officially the Tories are very reluctant to be seen to oppose this measure. They have already had 'a lot of flak' from electorate and politicians for the two objections so far. The first came from Tom Normanton, Tory MP for Cheadle. He is also a member of the European parliament, which takes up most of his time; but not enough to realise that his continental colleagues have more civilised ways of disciplining children. Corporal punishment in schools is illegal in all European countries except Britain and Eire. One or two Swiss cantons still have local 'right to beat' statutes, but the general European response to Britain's backward disciplinarians is of amused distaste. The Bill's second chance of going on to the committee stage on 2 February was stopped by Maidstone's Tory MP John Wells – a man near retirement and conspicuous by his absence from Commons affairs. Although the Bill will again be introduced on 6 April, it is really only of technical interest now. But its influence will survive.

For it is just one element in a broad front of abolitionist moves. Labour MP Andrew Bennett has been trying to introduce clauses into the Education Bill (now struggling through the committee stage) which would prevent a child under 12 from being beaten without parental consent and at least one warning; end beating of handicapped children; and take responsibility for corporal punishment away from secondary school heads and give it to school governors. Whether that last clause would mean any great improvement is debatable.

THE NATIONAL UNION OF TEACHERS is now at odds over the issue of beating at both national executive and local branch level. Thirteen local associations have put up abolitionist resolutions for the NUT conference at Easter. The NUT executive is backtracking from its position of refusing to discuss any limitation of its right to beat and is now talking about the need to consider corporal punishment within the whole question of discipline in schools. It also finds growing difficulty in persuading members to go on radio and TV to defend beating.

The Department of Education and Science is currently considering the discussions held with interested groups on the future of corporal punishment. It will have to report soon, particularly with the pressure building up specifically over the beating of handicapped children.

The influence of the main abolitionist pressure group – STOPP – has increased following its recent *Open Door* programme. It was one of the most professionally staged items in this generally disappointing 'public access' TV slot. (The film is available for hire to schools, PTAs and other groups from 10 Lennox Gardens, Croydon.)

One would have thought that this International Year of the Child could be put to some use in the campaign. But as yet there has only been feeble caution from the UK Executive Committee for IYC. It has commissioned a report (due next month) to set out *the two sides of the argument* and hopes then to be able to reach a policy decision on the evidence produced. Fortunately, there is already a powerful lobby within the Committee – well aware of all the arguments – which wants this year to see an end to the beating of children in *all* schools. If the Committee does fail to back such a reform, the Year of the Child in Britain will look pretty sick.

Rick Rogers

Cartoon published *Vanity Fair*. Courtesy of the British Library Board.

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LAW

Councils' power over children

John Draper writes: Next Tuesday the Law Lords adjudicate on a test case that will decide how far local authorities have the right to separate children from their parents in certain circumstances.

The case is being brought by the London Borough of Lewisham with the support of 50 other councils. They are seeking the reversal of an Appeal Court ruling last June that effectively undermined the draconian powers local authorities have to dispense with parental rights and assume responsibility for children placed voluntarily in council care. It was this ruling that last month enabled a London couple to initiate proceedings against Croydon corporation for allegedly 'falsely imprisoning' their child.

The assumption of parental rights in these cases rarely involves a court hearing. Usually, the parents have put their child in care because of illness, money problems, or homelessness. But if a social worker decides that it would be 'in the child's best interests' to be kept in long term care, a council meeting simply passes a 'resolution', and the parents' rights are completely dispensed with.

The decision must comply with criteria laid down in the 1948 Children Act, ranging from the abandonment of the child, to the somewhat dubious contention that the parent is 'unfit'. Councillors may challenge the social worker's report, but seldom do.

Last June's ruling, however, upset this cosy arrangement. Previously, the onus was on the parents to fight a resolution in a magistrates court (and few social work clients have the stamina to cope with court proceedings). But one parent who objected to Wirral council passing a resolution on her daughter managed to get to the Court of Appeal on a technicality. To Wirral's amazement, the court ruled that as the law stood, if a parent told the council that she wanted her child returned, any subsequent resolution would be invalid. For the purposes of the 1948 Act, the child was no longer in care.

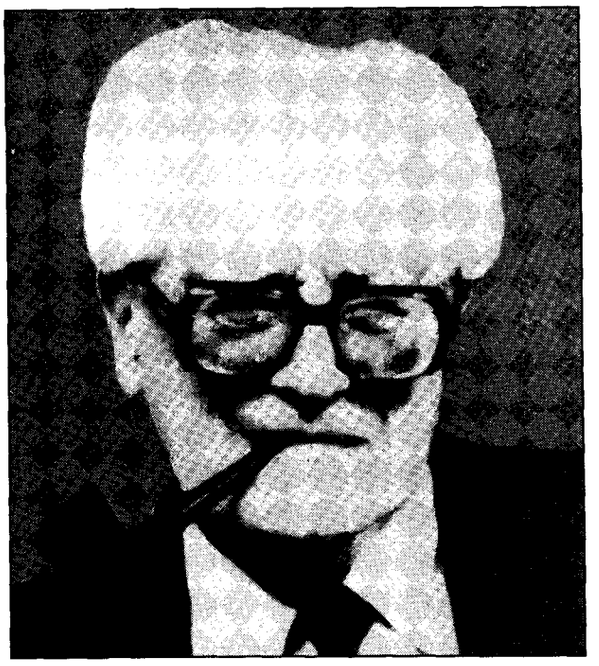
That interpretation created chaos in social services. In the Lewisham test case, for example, magistrates refused even to adjudicate on a disputed resolution because it was deemed invalid. Confusion is rife over what constitutes notification that a parent wants a child back (a letter or a phone call?), and when this takes effect.

Not everyone, however, is displeased with the ruling. The pressure group Justice for Children say it was an important decision in stemming the encroachment on parental rights by social workers. They want all decisions on taking children into care to be made in court.

But whatever the outcome of next week's hearing, the councils will still have the trump card. For local authorities are increasingly resorting to wardship proceedings where they fail to win care cases in the lower courts. And, as in Lewisham and Wirral, that generally means the child stays with the council.

Prisoners' friend

Anna Coote writes: One expected little enough from the Inquiry ordered by Merlyn Rees in response to the current crisis in Britain's prisons, for although it is hard to miss the fact that the crisis is caused by overcrowding, which in turn is caused by locking up a great many people who are in no way a danger to the public, the Inquiry is not intended to look at penal policy but at the working conditions of prison officers. Now we learn that the man chosen to act as Secretary to the Inquiry is one R. M. Morris. The same Mr Morris previously distinguished himself in 1974, when he was responsible for setting up the notorious control units.



"At 90 I find activity keeps me young."

Lord Brockway

We can all help to leave others the chance of happy old age.

"I am one of the lucky ones, for my public work brings me in constant contact with people. But, sadly, many 70 and 80 year olds must face every day in total loneliness. You and I can each do something about that — especially by leaving a legacy.

Poverty is no longer the reason for loneliness of the old. It is simply that there is almost no-where for them to go to meet others, and for the frail no easy means of getting there.

One of the most practical things you can do is to support Help the Aged's pioneer work in providing friendly Day Centres, and volunteer minibus lifts for those unable to walk.

I am thankful that Help the Aged also works to help those old people obliged to suffer hunger in countries struggling to develop. Time is not on the side of the old. I hope you are, and that you will send for the useful booklets the charity publishes on 'Making Your Will' and on the tax saving made possible by charitable legacy."

Fenner Brockway

Write for these interesting and informative booklets and the annual report and accounts to: The Hon. Treasurer, Lord Maybray-King, Help the Aged, Room NS1L 32 Dover Street, London W1A 2AP.

Perpetuate a loved name and help work for old people. **£150** *inscribes a name in enduring memory on the Dedication Plaque of a day centre.*

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In defence of TV unions

Do television unions support overstaffing and restrictive practices which damage the quality of programmes and could lead TV into the same problems as Fleet Street? That is what Jeremy Bugler claimed in an article in the NEW STATESMAN last year. Here Peter Kelly, a trade unionist, argues that Bugler based his case on untypical examples from just one union. Most TV workers, the author claims, just want a fair share of the wealth in a very wealthy industry – where money is often diverted into other businesses – and want to secure their jobs in an insecure industry. The workers frequently have to deal with incompetent managers. Explaining union activity without mentioning management is like recounting Irish history without mentioning the English.

THE FIFTEEN television companies which form the Independent Television Companies Association have a total monopoly of TV advertising; and very profitable it is too, even though writers like Bugler give the impression that it is hardly worth continuing to make TV programmes in the face of union intransigence and disruption. Most recent figures show, for instance, that London Weekend make profits of £6½m. on sales of £40m. This is after paying the government almost £7m. of TV levy. Return on capital invested is even more impressive, at 55 per cent.

ITV revenue comes from advertising, and advertising is booming. For the last two years advertising revenues have gone up by around 30 per cent each year. Last year saw an all time record revenue of around £400m. ITV companies tend to plead that they are in a risky business and that they therefore need higher profits than other kinds of operation. Yet a remarkable thing about this advertising revenue is that it generally seems to fluctuate so little compared with other areas of the economy. This was acknowledged by a representative of the Incorporated Society of British Advertisers in evidence to the Select Committee on Nationalised Industries (July 1978):

> It is a fact that between 1976 and 1977 TV advertising increased from £231m to £300m: that is very considerably more than inflation . . . We believe that provided the economy remains very competitive we are not going to see a recession in advertising.

ITV profits were analysed in an appendix to the Annan Report on the Future of Broadcasting, by Dr B. V. Hindley. He found that ITV showed an exceptionally good rate of return:

> The rate of return on the accounting value of capital in TV is likely to remain high relative to other industries . . . It is unlikely in the extreme that the bulk of their funds will find more profitable uses than TV production.

It's natural that the workers who make the programmes which enable companies to sell advertising time would like a share in the wealth. In the past it's been the militancy of ACTT rather than the generosity of companies that has gained relatively high wages and tolerable working conditions for many. But the grading structures and wage rates are full of anomalies and inequities, especially in areas where a lot of women are employed, and between grades which qualify for overtime and those which don't. Such anomalies have been exacerbated by rigid pay policy over the last four years so that the companies have kept down costs and boosted their profits.

Companies have used their profits to help them diversify. Pause for a moment and shed a tear for Trident TV (Yorkshire and Tyne Tees) who, the *Daily Telegraph* reported in June 1978, 'are suffering from a problem common to most TV contractors at present – plenty of cash and nowhere to invest it'. Most companies don't seem to have found it a problem. More and more, the TV companies are using large slabs of their profits to become powerful conglomerates in the communications industry. All the 'big five' companies (ATV, Granada, LWT, Thames and Yorkshire) have other interests which stretch across the whole entertainment and leisure field. This concentrates not only economic power, but also ideological power, power over ideas, information and culture, into a few hands.

The ACTT, and many others, have argued that such diversification takes spending from where it should properly belong – television programmes. The companies argue that such activities are a hedge against falling advertising revenues, and when times are hard for TV, money can be channelled back into TV from other, profitable enterprises. The Annan Committee weren't altogether convinced by this argument. They were sceptical about the liquidity of the diversified capital. In other words, they thought the money might not be so easy to switch back into TV when needed, so that the TV operation would still suffer, although the diversified parent company might not.

TO PROTECT THE UK production industry it's been necessary to restrict the amount of foreign material the TV companies use. This quota has recently been lowered from 14 per cent to 12 per cent, though a lot of imported material is shown at peak times. There are too many repeats and too many old movies which can cost a company as little as a few hundred pounds compared with, say, £40,000 per hour for original material. All this is depriving a talented workforce, with a multitude of skills, of useful employment. As the Select Committee put it:

> Creative talent certainly exists in Britain to originate more of the programme output of TV, given the funds and facilities.

Out of an anxiety to show that they are controlling the power of the ITV companies, governments have introduced a system of regulation which is impermanent, including the IBA itself, with the individual franchises coming up for reallocation every few years. This creates enormous problems, as was acknowledged in the recent report from the Select Committee which referred to the 'disincentive to investment and innovation' for ITV companies. And they found it

> disturbing to the morale of the workforce who see their employment as lacking in security and in the basic principles enshrined in the Employment Protection Act,

because TV companies can be axed by statute thus making workers redundant quite arbitrarily. The ACTT still have bitter memories of 1968 when one company was axed, two were merged, and three new groups were awarded franchises. These and other changes caused chaos which the ITCA was hard pressed to cope with. Neither Annan nor the Select Committee came up with any useful solution to this endemic insecurity.

INSECURITY ISN'T ONLY the lot of the 'permanent' staff. The TV industry has become increasingly casualised. This suits the employers in terms of costs and flexibility. The film industry has an even more crisis-torn history and has always had chronic unemployment to cope with. The heavy interdependence of film and TV makes both vulnerable: film labs depend on film series being produced by TV companies; numerous independent companies making shorts and documentaries are also part of the chain. These ancillary activities are very vulnerable to cutbacks in programme spending. The dozens of small production companies which turn out around 4,000 commercials a year are easily hit by fluctuating advertising spending.

There is a need for a pool of freelance workers in TV and film, for instance among directors, film cameramen and editors, in the interests of creative programme-making, but in some areas the workforce is casualised against its will. That's to say, they are on contracts which can vary in length from a week to 12 months. About 40 per cent of ACTT researchers, for instance, are unemployed at any one time. For the companies, the casual workforce acts as a buffer against hard times as they can be easily dispensed with.

Historically, many workers have been employed on 12 months 'rolling' contracts, which are renewed each year: in effect they are on the staff of whichever company they work for. They now have more security under the EPA. But the companies have still got away with not providing decent career structures, retraining, pension and retirement schemes, and not bettering their generally appalling record on opportunities for women employees.

It's extremely difficult for any trade union to fight such structural problems especially where there are sectional interests in different parts of the union – between film processing and videotape technology personnel for instance – and where a real conflict of interest may develop. ACTT especially has only had limited success in this respect.

NEW TECHNOLOGY, and the shadow of redundancies that inevitably accompanies it, is currently one of the most fiercely argued subjects within ACTT. Many TV workers are mobile people who have been to the US and Canada and other countries where the latest equipment, such as ENG (Electronic News Gathering), is in daily use – and they are itching to get their hands on it. The question is

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what the price should be, and how can jobs – film and electronic – be protected. The companies are also eager to get new technology because it needs fewer people to operate it and it's fast, efficient and cheap to buy and will become cheaper in the next ten years.

The new technology could put many ACTT workers in TV out of a job in spite of the recently agreed code of practice which aims to prevent redundancies. It could also alter the structure of the industry. There will be a big expansion of independent programme making. As *Broadcast* put it: 'If a private company can do for £200,000 what it cost the BBC £1m. to do in TC6 (a conventional studio set-up), the economics of independent production will start to make a great deal more sense'. This is roughly what happened to the film industy in the 1960s. For TV it could mean a casualised industry with more small employers, insecurity of employment and poor working conditions, because such fragmentation makes it harder to enforce union agreements. There could be a drastic slimming of the main TV companies which might become little more than publishers of programmes.

THE RESPONSE to the new technology by the unions – who remember the decline of the British film industry and the troubles in TV since the Fifties – has been defensive. And they have frequently been dealing with a hopeless management. As even Bugler admitted in his article: 'Primarily the responsibility for bad labour relations must rest with the management.' Most unions in TV rarely initiate anything, because they are too busy responding to the latest problem created by managements. There *is* a parallel with Fleet Street here. In the old days, ITV companies solved problems the easy way – by buying off trouble where employees were vocal or awkward, and by ignoring it if they could. That cowboy mentality is still alive and well. Many of the companies have a hopelessly amateur approach to industrial relations. Middle management is weak because the buccaneers at the top either can't or won't delegate.

Arrangements for numbers on studio and film crews, for instance, are not unilaterally imposed by unions, but mutually agreed between managements and unions, often at local level. As always, such agreements are compromises, with each side making concessions beyond what it would ideally like. Managements like to keep down numbers and pare costs; unions want to protect jobs and safeguard the quality of the product.

There are, of course, staffing levels in TV which do go beyond the needs of the job. There are several reasons for this. First, it's not easy to calculate what is the optimum crewing to maintain technical standards for any particular operation, especially with location filming. Film making is an intricate business. Its hardware – cameras, microphones, etc – is complex and delicate and a large quantity of it is needed for even the simplest piece of work. Dozens of things can go wrong. The fragmented, discontinuous nature of the job means that the pressure of work during, say, a ten-hour stint on location is intermittent, so that for some of the time everyone has to work very hard, while at other times some people have less to do. Hence the frequent allegations about 'people sitting around doing nothing'.

For most conventional film subjects the constraints are financial ones decided by managements. However, in some broadcasting a small crew is essential because of the danger and difficulty of covering upheaval, rebellion and anguish all over the world, in Bangladesh, Vietnam, Soweto, Rhodesia. Usually crews are kept small, but recently some TV workers have taken a different line so that for instance important films for programmes such as Granada's *World in Action*, have been cancelled. When this happens, the scope for such programmes seems, imperceptibly, to narrow: it may not be possible later, to recover the lost ground. In the end, there is a greater loss for the workers than for the employers. So why do the unions do it?

AS I HAVE TRIED to explain, such behaviour can only be understood in the context of the history and experience of a particular organisation. Bloodymindedness in ACTT is often explained by the existence of lazy and incompetent management who do not demonstrate a commitment to their products, although they like to bask in the prestige gained from outstanding programmes, and who fail over and over again to resolve problems in a rational way. This, for instance, to a great extent explains what happened to the *Disappearing World* programme, of which Bugler made such play in his article.

Disappearing World was a series of anthropological films with an international reputation and worldwide sales. For many years the unions had been conceding the minimal crews which were necessary when filming unsophisticated tribes people in remote areas. Like all such projects these films required planning years, rather than months, ahead. Over the last three years it became increasingly clear to Granada employees that the management were not doing this. At the start of 1976 the company assured its employees that the programme had a secure future. But Granada's commitment to the series seemed to be waning. Late in 1976 they said they wanted to have urgent discussions with the various unions on crewing and work patterns. The unions wanted the discussions too. They waited, and waited. But there were no further official approaches from management for seven months, during which time one programme was suddenly cancelled. In mid-1977 Granada repeated its wish to talk to the unions, with a deadline of September 1977. The deadline passed, with no formal initiative from management. In February 1978 Granada said that *Disappearing World* could not be included in a productivity package being negotiated because the programme no longer existed.

The company claimed however that it wanted to continue one of the films already in preparation in South America. But it had not left enough time for the delicate negotiations on crewing; it wasn't able to reach agreement, so the film was dropped. However, with all the time in the world it is extremely unlikely that agreement would have been reached, as industrial relations in every area of Granada had deteriorated so badly, such as in its dealing with production assistants, who have been underpaid and deprived of proper career prospects for years. The axing of *Disappearing World* was the result of years of union frustration with the behaviour of the management and Granada's failure to initiate talks on crewing for over 12 months.

The unions had other longstanding grievances. Until recently, staff film crews almost always got the third rate work, while the exciting assignments – like *Disappearing World* – went to freelances. Only union pressure changed this. Those film crews, and PAs, have been cheated of a fair deal, of job satisfaction, of prospects, for years. Is it any wonder they now stick out for the interesting jobs, foreign locations, and lots of overtime?

THESE KINDS OF CONSIDERATION loomed large in another case history taken up by Bugler in his NEW STATESMAN article. This dealt with another problem-ridden *Disappearing World* film (the last to be made as it turned out), shot in Brazil in 1976. Although again Bugler made a passing reference to bad management, his case was that intransigent unions insisted on crewing levels and excessive overtime which finished off the film. But he didn't make it clear that this was not a typical *Disappearing World* film. The setting was mainly urban. The team were able to stay in hotels rather than in mud huts, so the usual restrictions on crew size did not apply. Secondly, most of the major problems on this film arose because the management failed to do its job properly at the planning and negotiating stage. Matters such as how much overtime working would be needed were unresolved when the crew flew out to Brazil. This was crucial because it was the first *Disappearing World* project to use a staff crew. Before, freelance crews had been used in 'all-in deals', undercutting staff rates. The company could have negotiated an all-in deal with the Granada crew (at proper rates) – but it didn't really try. Bugler seems to disapprove of the basic idea behind overtime payments – which is to deter companies from imposing extremely long hours of work on their employees who are taken away from their homes and their families for days, weeks and even months at a time, and to ensure that when they do the workers are properly compensated for it.

We've seen clearly in the last few weeks that trade unions are a wonderful source of bad news for the media. Weak unions tend to be ignored; strong unions are pilloried. The general drift of industrial relations coverage in the press and on TV and radio is that workers, and trade unionists in particular, are responsible for society's economic problems. As Halloran and Croll's appendix to the Annan report put it, the very 'legitimacy of trade union activity appears as suspect and its consequences mainly negative'.

Media workers, ironically, are especially hard put to defend themselves: they are caught up in the structures through which they and their fellow trade unionists elsewhere are consistently presented in a derogatory way. Those structures are ultimately political ones. They have to do with who holds power in the society. Many unions, including ACTT, have been accused of interfering in politics. But the politics are there already: the media are probably the strongest vehicle there is for reinforcing the status quo. Their products are part of what Richard Hoggart has called 'the cultural air we breathe, the whole ideological atmosphere of our society, which tells us that some things can be said and others had best not be said'. Contrary to what some would have us believe, workers do not control the BBC or ITV, or the advertising industry, neither do they own or control publishing empires and Fleet Street newspapers.

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Dunlop . . . Incomes . . . Lucas

Dunlop deflated

Christopher Hird writes: Next Monday, 19 February, the national officers of the eleven trades unions with members in tyre giant Dunlop meet to discuss what is happening in that company. They will probably have in front of them a proposal from the workforce at the plant in Speke, which employs 2,400 people and which the company intends to close on 19 April. The workers want the factory kept open, albeit with a smaller work force; the national officers want to meet the Dunlop management and the Dunlop management don't want to change their mind: the European tyre business is in appalling shape and Dunlop looks particularly inelegant.

Past mistakes, such as the expensive co-operation with Pirelli and the failure to invest sufficiently and in the right sort of plant, mean that Dunlop is not well equipped financially or industrially to cope with the over capacity which bedevils the European tyre market at the moment. A year ago debts were high at over £270m and a large proportion of this fell due for repayment in the next few years.

Recently Dunlop have been able to renegotiate the repayment dates on some of their loans but the approach to their bankers has been accompanied by a plan to do something about the losses on their tyre business – which accounts for almost two-thirds of their worldwide assets. In 1978 Dunlop lost over £20 million on its European tyre operations – more than £9 million of this was in Britain, compared with a £9 million profit in 1977. Dunlop's plan involved closing the Speke plant, sacking 750 workers at two other UK plants and 1000 in Germany. Dunlop calculate that this will save £11 million in wages in a complete year, which, taken with a £75 million investment programme over the next five years, should put the tyre operation back into profit.

There is not, however, much room for error. Dunlop's debts in the UK could be as high as £130 million and will go higher with the investment programme which the banks have promised to finance. Dunlop hope the Department of Industry will meet some of the costs, though negotiations held so far have apparently got into difficulties over the question of the senior management of the company and what sort of guarantees could be given on future employment.

For the new investment to pay off, Dunlop need a high level of utilisation and, to get this, the unions' agreement to changes in shiftworking and job demarcation.

They hope that talks at local level will settle this within six months. At the moment Dunlop are operating at only 65 per cent of capacity, compared with over 80 per cent a year ago. They say they have just about held their market share – around a third – but they must have been hit as a major supplier to British Leyland.

It is not at all clear that Dunlop will find it easy to close Speke, where shop stewards talk bitterly of the company's failure to adapt to the changing market and the low level of investment: in only three of the last ten years has investment at Speke exceeded the annual depreciation charge. A week on Saturday trades union representatives from the main Dunlop plants meet to discuss possible industrial action to force the company to reconsider the Speke decision, including the blockading of £12 million worth of tyres in the Speke factory.

Helping the poor?

Margaret Gibson writes: Taxes and public spending are supposed to rob the rich and help the poor, even though some government spending on, for example, education and housing may actually help the better off. Nonetheless, every year The Central Statistical Office, in its publication *Economic Trends*, makes a valiant attempt to assess the overall impact of the government's budget on income distribution, showing that the very worst-off do have their income boosted by the government at the expense of the very rich. What is more, the most recent edition of *Economic Trends* shows that the redistributive impact of taxes and public spending increased between 1972 and 1977: on average in 1977, the top ten per cent of households had 4.6 times as much income, before any government intervention, as households in the bottom ten per cent. Five years earlier the comparable figure was 5.8. A similar improvement is shown if households are divided up according to their 'disposable' income. This measures income after cash benefits (e.g. pensions) and income taxes. On this basis the top ten per cent end up, after indirect taxes and benefits in kind such as education, with 6.2 times as much as the bottom ten per cent compared with 7.4 times as much in 1972.

However, the narrowing in income distribution between 1972 and 1977 was not part of a long term trend which has continued since. Much of the change was due to the sharp rise in both taxation and government spending in the first part of the five year period. Since 1976 government spending has risen more slowly than total output. Since 1977 there have been large cuts in income tax – which is progressive, i.e. redistributes from richer to poorer. There is likely to be a further shift over the next few years from direct to indirect taxation; as the CSO makes clear, this is regressive in its effect on income distribution: the poor are hurt more than the rich.

The CSO figures show that pensioners are overwhelmingly in the lowest income brackets and are the main recipients of cash benefits. Families with children benefit from government action through reduced taxes, family and child allowances, state education and the greater use of health services. These are the people who lose out when the government cuts taxes and spending. Those who gain are the young couples with no children, where 80 per cent of wives work full time and 10 per cent part time and, secondly, families with older children where 20 per cent of wives work full time and 50 per cent part time. Subsidies to rail travel have been allocated to households for the first time, in the latest *Economic Trends* article. As might be expected, they are highly regressive with everyone else subsidising the top ten per cent who can afford to travel by train.

Lucas lights the way

Patrick Wintour writes: 'Too much responsibility has been devolved from the centre on to local shop stewards who do not follow the basic tenets of trade unionism. And the sooner more responsibility has been gathered back into the hands of officers who do have that understanding, the better it will be for the union, the better it will be for the rest of us.' Jim Callaghan's commonplace was hardly out of his mouth last week before being comprehensively disproved by the Lucas Aerospace shop stewards' combine.

For four years, often against the resistance of union officials wary of multi-union company-wide combines, the Lucas stewards have been defending the most basic tenet of trades unionism – the right to a job. Their defence has been based mainly on a critique of Lucas management's corporate strategy, which has involved the deliberate running down of the UK business: 10,000 jobs lost in ten years. Last spring, as the combine had been forecasting, the company announced the closure of two plants in Liverpool and Burnley and a 2,000 reduction in the workforce. The combine, now approved by the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions and union officialdom, elected a working party to examine the company's plans. This week, after two months' work and visits to every Lucas site, they produced a 400 page report putting the case for keeping the factories open and turning the UK decline into expansion.

Lucas have paid for this unprecedented management consultancy and have co-operated fully in answering the combine's questions. The stewards believe that this was done in the hope that the report would be so shallow as to discredit the combine, which the management are keen to be rid of: in the past they have tried to set the white-collar against the blue-collar workers. However, the report is far too pungent to damage the combine. It deals fully, and in more details than before, with the alternative products which the company could produce and it provides a critical account of the run down in the company's design teams. It has also unearthed some curious facts about the company's behaviour.

For instance, it seems that Mr Blyth, the managing director of the Aerospace division, misled MPs when he told them the Victor works – one of the factories in Liverpool – was closing due to changes in technology. Blyth said 'this whole business is moving from hydro-mechanical systems to electronic systems.' The combine's report says that it is merely the *control* of the engine system which can be electronic: the major components must remain hydro-mechanical. The combine reckon that the company's aim in this obfuscation was to move the work from the UK to their associate company in Germany.

The study also discovered that what they were told was a crack in the floor of the Victor works turned out to be a major structural fault, costing £450,000 to repair, and entailing the closure of the plant for a year.

The company bought the Victor works from the government for £380,000 in 1975. Last year, before the closure of the factory was announced, the Department of Industry suggested to Lucas that they might like to open a new factory in Huyton, employing 500 workers. This scheme will cost the government about £6 million – roughly the same as they will have to pay out as a result of the closing of the Victor works.

The report draws attention to some of the idiosyncrasies of twentieth century capitalism. Lucas, like many companies, has received a plentiful supply of government grants (£10½ million between 1971 and 1977) and benefited to the tune of £75 million from the government's system of deferring (i.e. not paying) tax. The government, however, has not pressed Lucas to invest its money in its traditional aerospace business, which the report reckons could be expanding, or in diversification into socially useful products.

One of the recent recruits to the Lucas board has been Sir Anthony Part – until 1976 a permanent secretary at the DoI and vocal opponent of the combine's ideas. At the moment, the deputy director of Lucas Aerospace, Mr John Williams, is on a two year secondment to the NEB, where he looks after BL.

Not his forte

Christopher Hird writes: The *Investors Review* – a small financial magazine – closed down this month after surviving 90 years of wars, depressions and stock market slumps, but barely a year under the control of hotel tycoon Sir Charles Forte. Forte paid £60,000 for the run-on-a-shoestring magazine and appointed former *Financial Times* editor Sir Gordon Newton as chairman. Money was spent on a new managing editor, costly circulation and recruitment campaigns and a glossy new look. The result: a daunting 60 per cent increase in advertising and a 30 per cent increase in editorial copy was needed to keep the losses down to a respectable figure. In the face of new competition from Beaverbrook's *Financial Weekly* (which hit the streets this week under the leadership of former *Punch* editor William Davis, and with noted City observer Sir Harold Wilson as guest star), and with Trust Houses Forte shareholders an estimated £200,000 worse off, Sir Charles called it a day and returned to his hotels.

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New York Diary

☐ Sometimes I think there's a lot to be said for President Carter. His response to the foreign policy debacle in Iran has been to urge the citizenry to drive at 55 miles per hour, and thus offset the loss of Iranian oil. Since Nixon said the same thing in the wake of the oil embargo in 1973 we may assume this is now the authorised bipartisan reaction to reverses overseas.

Republicans are now announcing the end of 'bipartisan' foreign policy, so maybe one of their presidential candidates will recommend that Americans drive 10 mph faster to dramatise the gravity of the situation. Conservatives, of course, have always chafed at speed limits and devices to prevent them from being mangled in a crash – George Will, right-wing columnist, once argued that airplane seat belts place an intolerable restriction on human liberty. Politicians in Wyoming are now so keen on raising the speed limit to 65 mph that they are considering forfeiture of the Federal highway subsidy, one of the most cherished pieces of pork in the barrel. Death at any speed, but preferably as fast as possible.

☐ It seemed for a while that the Shah would commence his exile in the Palm Springs estate of former London ambassador Walter Annenberg, the conservative communications millionaire. Nixon stayed there in his dark hour, and so did Agnew. In fact Annenberg has such a liking for deposed princes, emperors, presidents and others of high estate that he could open up a theme park where foreign despots might be observed in a natural setting, sunning themselves, totting up their sequestered assets and rehearsing for the day of ultimate return. Pol Pot may be there already toiling away as a gardener.

But Annenberg's hospitality was apparently somewhat strained recently by a visit of the Shah's mother. She arrived with twenty-one dogs, a couple of vets and other flunkeys too numerous to mention. Mr and Mrs Annenberg cherish their lawns and suffered with abhorrence much canine rootling. Now Annenberg is said to be noting with satisfaction the Shah's present preference for Morocco.

☐ The circumstances in which Nelson Rockefeller died remain the main topic of conversation in New York. The original notion, propounded by Nelson's chief flack, was of course that he died in his office while toiling late on a book about art, and that his passing rivalled that of Socrates in its elevation and dignity. Then it transpired that he was in another house with a woman and there was an hour missing between time of heart attack and time of first emergency call.

What actually happened? Nelson was cremated at tremendous speed, which disposed of some of the evidence. Megan Marshack, the 25 year old assistant with him at time of expiry, is keeping her mouth shut. Her friend Poncita Pierce, summoned by Megan in the hour of crisis, made the emergency call, but will say nothing further. At least some of the Rockefeller clan are known to be indignant at the possibility that precious minutes slipped by while Marshack dithered. From them have come the leaks that she was paid $60,000 a year, had riding lessons in Pocantico and ordered the servants around.

Rockefeller was renowned for his abrupt enthusiasms for women, though the newspapers remained discreet about the matter when he was alive. The *schadenfreude* with which they are covering his death is a way of making up for years of deference to the old beast. (Even his last business venture, manufacture of copies of his art treasures which he then flogged to the populace, was treated with respect.) Meanwhile, millions of husbands across the country will revile him for bringing the ancient and honoured practice of 'working late at the office' into disrepute.

☐ One of the less sad aspects of Rockefeller's death is that it may prevent Henry Kissinger from reaching the US Senate. He had been mooting a race in 1980, replacing Jacob Javits, who is 75 this year. Javits had seemed prepared to bow out gracefully but in the last few days has sprung into pre-electoral activity, accepting speaking engagements from Republican county chairmen and the like. The sagacious Javits has been heartened by the fact that Kissinger is now denied the services of his sponsor Nelson as fundraiser and arm-twister in chief. Kissinger's voice was certainly tremulous in the memorial service when he hailed the chief as the greatest American he had ever known. There is absolutely nothing that Kissinger will not do to ingratiate himself with the Republican establishment and thus keep his options open for a return to glory.

His reservations about SALT II, planted in the *Economist* and widely publicised here, have plainly affected the already slim chances of this meagre treaty getting through the Senate. Now he is proclaiming that Carter's wet passion for human rights and insufficient zest for intervention or a sponsored coup by the military 'lost' Iran. If anything 'lost' Iran it was manifestly Kissinger's preference for tyranny, the electrode and the thumbscrew as preferred methods of governance in the lands of America's allies. One of the more serious charges one can lay to the American people is that they continue to regard this butcher's apologist as a statesman.

☐ In contrast to British frenzies, the US media have been relatively restrained in coverage of strike chaos. Some of this restraint may stem from the fact that it is now a simple matter of doubling the numbers to get the dollar equivalent of sterling. Thus US reporters probing the island's discontents on a salary of $35,000 or so find that the strikers are after rather exiguous amounts of change. Some of the plummier types of pundit have naturally been expounding on the constrictions of the British class system, contrasted as usual with the gilded stairway to riches available to all this side of the Atlantic.

A trot around Harlem is a quick corrective to this kind of talk. The median income in the United States is actually $17,000 and 87 per cent of the population will never squeeze past the bottleneck, which comes at $30,000. After this it is a chancy business getting on to the level of the thousand or so people who report annual income of over $1 million on their tax forms.

☐ New York continues to take up where Sodom and Gomorrah left off. Studio 54, Disco-snob capital of the Western World, is becoming a little jaded by time – and drug indictments – but the traveller can find other places of diversion. G and G Barnum, for example, sits just off Times Square, on the site of the old Peppermint Lounge where the twist started. In it cavort, to disco-din, an assortment of straights and some of the most beautiful transvestites in the city.

Above them go-go dancers swing with inexpert energy from trapezes. In the era of the hormone shot it is useless to regard bosoms as a reliable sex indicator. Ankles and shoulders can be useful clues but experts swear that the male adam's apple is the true give-away.

More jaded libertines can press south to the industrial district and Chateau 19. On Tuesdays and Thursdays some 500 people gather here to enjoy New York's first public S and M club. No staged revue, but participatory democracy. The customers insult, shackle and whip each other according to taste. Admission price: $7.50 for men and $2.50 for women. The most interesting customers are the dozen or so dominatrices (or dominatrixes, if you will). Queen of this set is a nineteen-year-old called Mistress Rose, marvellously adroit at trussing men up in cellophane. They stand like flies in amber, exulting as Rose wangs away with her pandy bat. She says she learned the tricks at the age of ten from her mother, who was professional in the business.

Alexander Cockburn

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ An MP told yesterday why he killed off a Bill which would have banned the beating of handicapped children in special schools. Mr Tom Normanton, Tory MP for Cheadle, Cheshire, made it clear he was not in favour of caning mentally handicapped pupils 'because they don't know what they are doing.' But he said he was strongly for corporal punishment in general, and added: 'I see no reason why any protection should be given to the physically handicapped.' – *News of the World* (G. Coad)

☐ A large part of Dr Owen's reply was taken up with a rebuttal of the charge that Britain was pursuing selfish policies towards the European Community. 'We do not act selfishly, we are motivated by our own interests,' he stressed. – *Guardian* (Stephen Corrin)

☐ 'But having interviewed two ex-offenders who have undergone the same treatment and had their breasts removed, we find they are happy to continue with it. It has changed their lives and enabled them to live normal, decent middle-class lives,' he said. *Evening Standard* (Marion Freedman)

☐ The deputy chief fire officer for Avon, Mr Frederick Ponsford, said: 'We had vacancies at Pill and this female applied. She did everything the male applicants did, completed her training successfully, and there was nothing we could do but accept her.' – *Guardian* (C. Ligota)

☐ But her conviction of a substantial Conservative victory is supported by reports from constituency parties indicating a significant shift from Labour by people in key marginal seats – and even more by their wives. – *Sunday Telegraph* (Helene Hayman)

☐ A man who pleaded guilty to being drunk and disorderly told Chester magistrates he had been out celebrating his divorce date. – *Liverpool Echo* (Keith Norman)

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Son of Polaris

Sir, Robin Cook builds up a persuasive argument in his article 'Buy a new H-bomb – the easy way' (NS 12 January). But the Left will not have produced a coherent defence policy until it can quite specifically go beyond the optimistic assumption that 'non-nuclear means can probably be evolved with which to secure our national defence', as you claim in your leader. That 'probably' is very weak indeed, and Mr Cook doesn't begin to cope with it. Is he – are you – not talking about conscription and other 'unthinkables'?

May I comment on some specific points in Mr Cook's article?

(1) We do not find ourselves relying on 'deterrence' by choice, and no element of it is lovable. Our dependence on it is a fact of our national life, and getting away from it is not among our national options. To deter attack, whether nuclear or conventional, without British nuclear weapons, must be Mr Cook's purpose.

(2) Multilateral disarmament negotiations have not 'failed', they have not been going on. There have only been secret bilateral negotiations between the superpowers.

(3) The American designation of British and French nuclear weapons as 'theatre nuclear programmes' derives from the ridiculous United States/Soviet Union agreement that only intercontinental weapons should be deemed strategic. This has permitted short-range Soviet weapons, which are far more numerous than the British, French and Chinese strategic weapons put together, to escape the SALT negotiations.

(4) Certainly the official rationale for British nuclear weapons does not mention our long-term suspicion of the Americans as explicitly and candidly as the French. But fear of the Soviet Union and suspicion of American infidelity are not alternatives, as Robin Cook seems to imply: they go together.

(5) Use of nuclear weapons? Deterrence has always oscillated between two observations, both true: 'Nuclear weapons are too horrible to use', and 'Only nuclear weapons under our control can prevent our being coerced by nuclear threats'.

(6) Can we in fact match Soviet conventional forces in Europe so substantially as to be able to deter, not only Soviet conventional attack (those tanks), but Soviet nuclear and chemical attack as well?

(7) British unilateral renunciation of nuclear weapons would have no effect on the states now considering acquiring nuclear weapons, not on Israel, nor on South Africa, nor on South Korea, nor on Taiwan, nor on the Latin Americans. How could it? It has always been the relevance of nuclear weapons to their country's precise military situation that has caused governments to acquire them. There have been no frivolous nuclear powers. That is why it is so appallingly difficult to devise any effective non-proliferation policy.

(8) The Cod Wars were a late imperialist aberration that the Navy will never again be asked to take part in. Hardware for the new offshore constabulary should not be paid for out of the defence budget at all, any more than our Panda cars.

(9) Robin Cook may be convinced that the deterrent role of Polaris submarines is a 'moral enormity'. But equally, as your own leader points out, the plight of the people of Czechoslovakia is also a 'moral enormity'. How is *our* government to protect us from such a fate? The nub is this: do British nuclear weapons make nuclear war more or less likely or the loss of our independence more or less likely? We do not know the answer, indeed we cannot, with any certainty. But we can notice that only non-nuclear weapon states have recently been attacked and overrun – two of them in Europe – and that the alternative defence policy that Mr Cook advocates would depend on non-nuclear means that can no more than 'probably' be evolved. The devil we know is, after all, so perfectly awful that neither side can have any possible motive for releasing it on the world.

Mr Cook's totally disenchanted view of the multilateral disarmament negotiations may now be out of date. The new Geneva Disarmament Committee, cleared of the castrating superpower chairmanship and with France not only a member, but brandishing a disarmament policy we could well envy, the Soviet Union's economic plight (as described by Mr Brezhnev to the CPSU Central Committee last November), the Rumanian and Polish refusals to put up their defence spending, even the death of the minister who has presided over the vast expansion of the Soviet Union's defence industry since 1963: all these *could* be combining to open up new opportunities.

There are several areas in which the UK now has (and, astonishingly, seems to be taking) the chance to push: Space, (where superpower militarisation is proceeding fast in spite of the Space Treaty); an International Verification Satellite Agency; Confidence Building Measures at sea; the military budgets pilot scheme; and of course SALT III. Perhaps the UK could even get President Carter to repeat at the Disarmament Committee his proposal for superpower reductions 'even to 50 per cent' and insist this time that the Soviet Union respond.

ELIZABETH YOUNG

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Public images

Sir, The photo of T & G pickets menacingly silhouetted against a retiring sun (NS 26 January) is, in fact, nothing unusual from the lenses of *Observer* cameramen. Standing on the picket line during the student 'unrest' at Essex University in early 1974 I was approached, along with three other shivering souls, by a photographer from the *Observer.* He asked us to pose on nearby bleak hill – yes, silhouetted against a falling sun, looking in all directions for hordes of bobbies. The published picture was quite impressive although the promised glossy copy never arrived; hordes of bobbies did, however, with a riotous 105 arrests the end result.

MICK BARRY

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Black Jacobins

Sir, In his review of Wenda Parkinson's *The Gilded African* (NS 2 February) Paul Foot compares it with 'a much better book about the San Domingo slave rising, *Black Jacobins,* written in 1938 by the great West Indian author C.L.R. James', which is, as he says, 'not in print'. Your readers may like to know that in August we are reissuing *Black Jacobins* simultaneously with two other books by James: the first ever publication of his major theoretical work *Notes on the Dialectic,* and *Spheres of Existence,* a second volume of selected writings. We published the first selected volume, *The Future in the Present,* a year ago together with his *Nkrumah and the Ghana Revolution,* and a third and final selected volume, *At the Rendezvous of Victory,* is in preparation for 1980. All these books are and will be in both hardback and paperback editions. And finally, not a plug: any interested readers should make efforts to get hold of James's only novel, *Minty Alley,* from its publishers: New Beacon Books, 76 Stroud Green Road, London N4.

CLIVE ALLISON

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In praise of Hong Kong

Sir, It is not my business to intervene in Francis Wheen's attack on Sir Keith Joseph (NS 19 January) but if his stories about Korea and Singapore are as misleading as his remarks about Hong Kong, he is unlikely to achieve much credibility.

Hong Kong is not utopia but it does have: full employment; the highest wages in Asia outside Japan; a high rate of growth in real wages; gross domestic product (GDP) growth in 1978 of 10 per cent in real terms; an infant mortality rate slightly lower than the UK (14 per 1,000 live berths); life expectancy at birth for boys (70) about the same as the UK and for girls (77) slightly higher; housing, educational, medical and social security services among the best in Asia. Hong Kong is also Britain's second largest market in Asia, coming only after Japan.

We have taken in over 100,000 immigrants, legal and illegal, from China in 1978, provided permanent homes for 13,000 Vietnamese refugees since 1975 and are a temporary home for another 10,000 awaiting settlement elsewhere — 1,000, we are glad to hear, in Britain.

We started after the war with 600,000 people in a rundown sea port. Today there are 4½ million people – not far short of the population of Scotland – in an industrial, financial and commercial centre of some note.

Development of this magnitude obviously does not depend on sweated labour or the exploitation of children, but it would be silly to pretend that we have never had hardship. Mr Wheen's quote from the 1971 census is accurate. There were 36,000 children in the 10-14 age group at work. This group includes 14 year olds. The legal minimum age for industrial employment is still 14, as it was in Britain when I was a young man. In itself this figure does not prove child labour, though I am sure at that time a good many of these children were working under the legal minimum age for industrial employment.

While we have had laws against child labour for many years, the effective cure for it is the provision of education, and on education Mr Wheen is wrong. Education up to the age of about 15 (six years primary and three years secondary) is free and it is compulsory up to the age of 12. This age is being advanced as adequate school places are provided. All children leaving primary school since last summer will go through the full three years of secondary schooling.

We did have an economic setback after the oil crisis for about a year in 1974-5 and there were cases when real wages and even money wages declined. But unemployment was contained. Real wages dropped from an index of 101 in March 1974 to a low of 96 a year later. By March 1976 it was 107 and now (September 1978) real wages are 27 per cent higher than in 1973-4. Treasury figures show that real weekly net income in Britain in 1978 was slightly lower than in 1973-4. (In Hong Kong very few workers pay income tax and none pay social insurance contributions, so this is a valid comparison) GDP in real terms grew at only 2.2 per cent in 1974 and 2.9 per cent in 1975. In 1976 the economy recovered and GDP growth in real terms was 16.9 per cent. In 1977 it was 11.6 per cent. Even so, Hong Kong is not rich. GDP per capita in

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1976 was £1,299 while national income per person in the UK was £1,965 and in Japan was £2,472.

I do not know what Mr Wheen meant by lack of individual liberty in Hong Kong. We have a free – and prolific – press, an independent judiciary, and no detention without trial. We also have several specialised institutions for the investigation of grievances, review of administrative inefficiency, detection of corruption and so forth.

D. C. BRAY
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Francis Wheen replies: Defenders of the indefensible are always a despicable breed, and never more so than when they have a budget of £1 million per annum with which to do it, like Mr Bray. His letter is a small masterpiece of misleading information. 'Education up to the age of about 15 . . . is free': free for whom? For the small number of children who manage to pass the highly competitive tests imposed (it is no coincidence that the juvenile suicide rate in Hong Kong is so high), while the rest – more than three-quarters of the children at secondary schools – are forced into private schooling. Only an extremely talented semantic twister could suggest that 'free education' is a fair description of a system in which most people are denied such education.

I haven't the space for a full-scale refutation of Mr Bray's verbal acrobatics, but to take his main points in order: when Mr Bray refers to 'the highest wages in Asia outside Japan,' I can only assume he means wages for adult males in prime employment, and that it has not occurred to him that such a comparison is meaningless anyway without considering other factors such as the low social wage, high rents and so on. The discussion might also be helped if the Hong Kong government saw fit to issue proper income indices. It's true that real wages have recently gone up, but productivity and profits have increased by many times more so it can hardly be said that the workers have had a fair share of the country's growth to which Mr Bray refers. The low infant mortality rate is connected more with the traditional Chinese family structure and the Chinese attentiveness towards children than with any health care provided by the Hong Kong government.

Mr Bray's praise of Hong Kong's housing service displays astonishing nerve: a number of people who live on leaky, fire-risk boats in Hong Kong harbour have been asking the government to resettle them for 18 months; last month 76 of them went to Government House to present a petition for housing and were promptly arrested by the police for 'unlawful assembly'. Incidentally, this event led the Hong Kong branch of Justice to describe the colony as a police state – no rights to demonstrate, petition or hold a public assembly – which doesn't entirely square with Mr Bray's glowing reports of the liberty enjoyed by Hong Kong's inhabitants. And if there is 'no detention without trial', is Mr Bray prepared to tell us how many inmates of the Victoria Road detention centre in recent years have been allowed a trial?

Ceylon's raw capitalism

Sir, Christopher Hitchens (NS 19 January) is right about some effects of the cheap-labour Free Trade Zone. But he's wrong – so far – about accompanying repressive labour legislation. The government hastily backed off from its anti-working class White Paper proposals: in the face of trade union opposition it first declared that it was not committed to enacting the draft legislation as it stood, and then that in any case the proposals would only apply to workers in public corporations – i.e. not to Zone companies. In this context, it's curious that a socialist paper should say that one of the main problems of the FTZ is that it 'distorts the labour market': so do trade unions, of course. And what is it that an 'undistorted' labour market would do for Sri Lanka's development? It's also a pretty right-wing view of unemployment to argue implicitly that, because cheap female industrial workers were formerly household workers at even more miserable remuneration, they were not part of the labour force nor of the unemployment problem.

The most unfortunate aspect of the article, however, is that Hitchens's criticisms, many of them true and important, manage nevertheless to miss two essential points.

Firstly, Sri Lanka *isn't* the Third World in miniature in crucial respects. It has achieved standards of literacy, nutrition, health and longevity far higher than some nations many times as rich, at a GNP per capita of around $200 (i.e. among the poorest nations on earth). And it has maintained a sufficiently constitutional political system for Left movements still to operate – though as Hitchens implies their position is increasingly fragile, in part because the Left's treatment of the Tamil national question has repeatedly trimmed to the Singhalese chauvinist wind, and allowed many Tamils to drift towards a sterile secessionism.

Secondly, the article underestimates the importance of the change of regime in 1977. The new UFP government represents a major shift away from the petty-bourgeois nationalist coalition of Mrs Bandaranaike, with its *étatiste* and nominally welfarist politics. What the new regime is attempting is full-scale capitalist growth through large inflows of foreign public and private capital and the disciplining of the agrarian economy to fuel industrialisation and the rapid development of the forces of production. To do this, it is dismantling many of the social benefits (such as food rations) which the Ceylonese people had fought for, and which represented real gains for the masses, no matter how partial or flawed. It is this enterprise of raw capitalist accumulation which is Sri Lanka's current challenge to socialist movements and to Left orthodoxy about the trap of underdevelopment – and the real basis for comparability with other parts of the Third World where similar things are under way. That challenge needs careful research and sensitive political-economic analysis. I don't think Hitchens provided either.

GEOFF LAMB

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Silkin hits back – oops!

Sir, I would have been surprised if Duncan Campbell (Free Speech, NS 26 January) had approved of my article in *Labour Weekly*. He has made his views on the ABC case well known on numerous occasions. But what a sensitive little flower he is. He must learn to live with the fact that freedom of information, in which he claims to believe, includes the right to put forward a variety of views, even views which may be mildly critical of Duncan Campbell.

He claims I misquoted the trial Judge, and then proceeds to do so himself. He quotes the Judge as saying 'Although the information was stale and of a comparatively low level of intelligence I believe it was still important.' – Note the full stop – but he conveniently omits the words immediately following . . .'and its disclosure might have been helpful to an enemy actual or potential, internal or external'. If Duncan Campbell would not like me to defend him I would be equally reluctant to have someone, as casual as he is about his punctuation, report my speeches.

I was asked to write the article about which Mr Duncan Campbell complains by the Editor of *Labour Weekly*. I sought to point out the difficulties and complexities of the Official Secrets Act and the problems facing the Attorney-General in the light of the advice he received and his duty to have regard to the public interest. I would also point out that I have campaigned certainly longer than Duncan Campbell, and at a time when it was not fashionable to do so for the reform of this Act. I did not impugn the motives of Duncan Campbell in my article. I wish he was as charitable about the motives of others.

ARTHUR DAVIDSON

House of Commons
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The sentence-structure of which Davidson complains is his own. He wrote in Labour Weekly:

. . . Mr Justice Mars-Jones said that the information disclosed was still important and of a kind 'which might imperil the lives of former colleagues and other innocent people'.

Duncan Campbell's business (NS 26 January) was to deal with that fiddle. He pointed out that the judge said in one passage of Berry's information that

Although the information was stale and of a comparatively low level of intelligence, I believe it was still important

and said in a quite different passage, when speaking of American defectors from the CIA, that their disclosures (nothing to do with Berry)

might imperil the lives of former colleagues and other innocent people.

If Davidson thinks that the full quotation from Mars-Jones's first *passage is the relevant thing, why didn't he put it in his* Labour Weekly *article? The answer, presumably, is that he was too busy trying to mix it up with something quite different, which he considered more damaging to the ABC defendants. Davidson does not even try to deal with the three further distortions which were documented in the* NEW STATESMAN. *Ed.*

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FIRST PERSON
Arthur Marshall

Early Warnings

There comes a moment in life when there is nothing for it but to face reality, abandon all pretence, remove one's head from the clouds and see the world fairly and squarely for what it is and one of the inescapable facts to which I have recently been forced to adjust my poor old mind is that the supply of Queen Victoria's knickers available for sale at public auction is virtually inexhaustible. They are said to be, and as one would imagine, of extremely generous dimensions, composed of a serviceable linen decorated with narrow ornamental pleats and, as even the highest in the land have never been able to trust laundries to get property back to the rightful owners, are firmly monogrammed (the regal equivalent of Cash's name tapes) with the royal cipher in what I assume to be a fairly ostentatious manner. Their authenticity is plainly beyond question, as is their durability.

Although the phrase has a ring of lese-majesty about it, a pair of these important garments 'came under the hammer' at Bonhams a mere week or so ago and were knocked down (lese-whatnot again) to a Liverpool antiquary for £210, a record sum far beyond the auctioneer's mournful expectation of £35, a figure so paltry as almost to be in itself treasonable, a representative of the firm having announced (and it's off to The Tower with *him*) that, as regards Her Majesty's personal wear, it was their view that 'the bottom had dropped out of the knicker market'. It was, I gather, the Monarch's thoughtful practice, when wanting to bestow a kindness on her ladies-in-waiting, to make presents to them of her knickers, though whether the knickers were in prime, mint condition or had already brushed cheeks with greatness is not revealed. Whatever words of gratitude for these unusual gifts can the recipients have found to stammer out? But the converse might make rather a merry NS week-end competition: 'Refuse a present of knickers from Queen Victoria in a manner which could not possibly cause her offence.'

Another fact that I have had to face in my new down-to-earth approach is that my vocabulary is woefully stodgy and antiquated, though I do try to keep up to date by reading the newspapers, when they manage both to get printed and to reach Devon, and I try to widen my range by drinking in the fascinating information from the pulsating world outside, headlines and all. BLONDE HOSTESS STRANGLED IN LUXI-FLAT WITH OWN PLASTIC PIXIE-HOOD it quite often says but using words that I would find it rather difficult to drag into my own measured prose. One finds verbal hurdles everywhere one goes. Reading the other day the excellent 'Summer Sunshine' illustrated brochure from the admirable travel firm of Thomas Cook and with my mind happily fixed once more on Italy and the joys of the Amalfitani coast, I see with some dismay that I have now, when relaxing on beaches always described as being sun-drenched, to get accustomed to the word 'sunbrella', a freshly coined one which, alas, speaks all too clearly for itself.

But do take note that we, in this country, may shortly be going to require protective contraptions for our nappers of far stouter construction than sunbrellas. My conscientious reading of newspapers has alerted me to the fact, and one which I hasten to pass on to you, that whirling somewhere far above our heads is an 80-ton Skylab satellite which, its usefulness seemingly over, is later in the year to be 'programmed' to return to earth. The satellite is, we are told, not intended to come gently floating down on a roomy parachute and go splash off Bognor but will hurtle violently towards us, partially disintegrate and then scatter itself over a wide area. 'Experts say', my newspaper chillingly remarks, 'that up to 500 pieces will survive re-entry.' Well, that's an awful lot of pieces. I am reminded of Mrs Patrick Campbell who, on hearing that somebody in the first world war had been wounded in sixteen different places, said that she had never realised that men *had* so many places.

Of what will these multitudinous pieces consist? The word 'lab' seems to indicate those bits of apparatus which people used to fiddle about with in chemistry classes – pipettes and retorts and microscopes. Does this mean that when, down in Devon, my Cousin Madge dons her macintosh, emerges from her house and wends her way to the shop for a fresh jumbo-size canister of 'Squeezo', she may suddenly receive a bunsen-burner on her beret? Will Miss Entwhistle, setting out for a hearty morning's brass-rubbing in one of our charming neighbourhood churches, find her steps impeded by a fume-chamber come to rest in her porch? Will the Vicar be festooned with litmus paper? Is 'Myrtlebank' itself to be bombarded from above with spring balances, beakers, petri dishes and filter pumps? Will, I ask myself, always ready for an additional source of income however slight and transitory, these devices reach earth in a sufficiently intact condition to command a price in the second hand market?

If I seem to be taking a somewhat narrow and parochial view of this unwelcome shower from on high, it is because a word-association has brought the whole thing close to us. Our village shares a name with an atmospheric layer, the 'Appleton layer' (discovered, though not visited, by the distinguished physicist, Sir Edward Appleton), a region about 150 miles up which handily reflects radio waves in some way known only to itself and in which layer, who can doubt, the unoccupied Skylab is currently twirling. In Appleton therefore we feel, as was the case with bombs during the war, that the lab has got, so to speak, our name on it and will return to us, piecemeal, in due course. The Skylab's origin is, naturally, America, and the Senate Science sub-committee will find themselves facing the full force and fury of our Appleton Protection Society should serious damage ensue to our roofs. We have already dealt successfully with two lots of speculative builders who wanted to spoil the village. After them, Mr Carter will be by comparison putty in our hands.

But as it happens, down in the South West, we are already busy with other matters and are accustoming our minds to what I am sure will result in countrywide displays (our village hall is ready and waiting) of considerable culture and refinement. You cannot have failed to notice a recent hospitable event when, on our behalf and with our cash, the Assistant Under-Secretary of State for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office gave a 'luncheon' to Mr Neagu and Mr Popescu, 'members of a Rumanian Cultural Delegation'. I am happy to tell you that room was found for this exciting gathering at the Savoy itself. Hooray. What could be better? Details of numbers and menu are not yet to hand (my customary letter requesting this information must have miscarried, or got eaten by mistake), but it *sounds* to me like a table for 12 (the Rumanian Ambassador was also present) and at least a 4-courser. My social experience of Ambassadors, limited though it may be to the frog and American ones, leads me to think that as a body they don't very readily say a horrified 'no' to oysters. Nobody, however, would wish our scale of entertainment on this joyous occasion to be anything but lavish. And 'a' Rumanian Delegation devoted to Culture surely implies, hooray again, that there are others to come. One merely hopes that Whitstable's supply of this nutritious bivalve will be equal to the strain.

Wishful, in the spirit of the times, to discover what, if anything, there is of value for me, the man in the street, in this jolly junketing, I have come upon a rather basic difficulty. The encyclopaedias inform me, no doubt correctly, that Rumania is about the same size as the UK and roughly round in shape. They speak, in rightly glowing terms, of its maize crops, its rolling plains, its gypsies, its widely meandering share of the Danube, its health resorts among the Carpathian forests, the glaciated peaks of its mountains, its bears and wolves, its spruce and pine, its zinc and mercury. But nowhere is there a single syllable about its culture. What can the delegation have come to bring us or to arrange for our delight? Poetry-group readings from a town called Cluj? Folk dancers in full national costume? Wild gypsy play-to-me gatherings? It can hardly be demonstrations of bear-baiting. Or have they perhaps, and heaven help them, come to get culture from us? Don't worry. I'll keep asking.

Roger Woddis

Credo

'I believe in the people.' – Mr Callaghan.

I believe in our leaders,
The gangsters with tear-filled eyes,
Who think we are all half-stupid,
And cannot tell truth from lies,
The honey-tongued presenters
With clipboards between their thighs.

I believe in the talkers
Who've never produced a car,
The righteous who talk of mercy
And say we have gone too far,
Who plead for the sick and dying,
And know where the cameras are.

I believe in a saviour,
A blonde with a blue rosette,
The pygmies who can't remember,
The giants who can't forget,
I believe in the sleepers,
Who have not woken yet.

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

John Bayley

The Fatal Emptiness

The Life of Aleksandr Blok: Vol I, The Distant Thunder, 1880-1908 by AVRIL PYMAN *Oxford* £12.50

Tolstoy, who disliked tricks and sensationalism in literature, thought that the Russian decadence had little else to offer, though it might offer it in a characteristically robust and flamboyant Russian way. Of Andreyev's *The Red Laugh* he said scornfully that by trying to frighten him so hard it was actually the least frightening thing he had ever read. Blok remarked that Andreyev was 'stupider than his own thoughts'. It is an acute comment on a certain kind of talent. Stupidity defines itself in art by giving the impression of trying too hard. Being a genius, Blok himself was well aware that the judgment on Andreyev applied to himself as well: the expression of his genius depended on this kind of stupidity.

Physically Blok had magnificence; part eidolon and part Assyrian king, with a touch of the young Oscar Wilde thrown in – a not unengaging mixture. The stylised portrait by Somov deliberately makes him a Dorian Gray over whom there still hovers a kind of pedantic spruceness, a Teutonic *gravitas*. His father's family were in fact of German origin; his father – a remarkable man but impossible to live with – was Professor of Law at Warsaw University. A charming photograph of his mother and father is reproduced in Avril Pyman's admirable biography. His mother has a sweet broad primitive face, with Slavic eyes wide apart, and a significant resemblance to the big and beautiful girl, Lyubov Mendeleyeva, whom her son was to marry – a marriage probably never consummated. Mendeleyev was a celebrated chemist, and Blok's mother was the daughter of Professor Beketov, distinguished scientist and Rector of Petersburg University. It is a Frankensteinian inheritance, a suitable alembic for a poetry of demons and zombies, with something touching about it and something trashy as well.

A warm and happy childhood. His mother, who adored her son, soon left his father and married a regimental commander. Blok had great reserves of affection for father and stepfather alike. His childhood moved between the big comfortable barracks, the Rector's house at the university, and the small family estate at Shakhmatovo, near Moscow. Though there was the excellent Tenishev day school in Petersburg, at which both Mandelstam and Nabokov were pupils, Blok was sent by his mother to an indifferent school because it was nearer home. He showed no aptitudes and was lazy, though he did better at the university. He had no homosexual leanings, but in early sexual adventures he contracted VD from a prostitute, which may have been the real reason for the non-consummation of his marriage.

Also the reason for a conventionally Victorian sexual idealism in his early poetry, an attitude that seems more like a throwback to Rossetti and Swinburne than one belonging to the 20th century. But Blok does seem old-fashioned in many ways, compared to such a symbolist as Yeats, with whom he is often but misleadingly paralleled. For one thing Yeats was a toiler and a realist, making and finding a use for every last grain of his talents and experiences. Blok is much more like Swinburne, his genius leaping to instant life and flaring up at intervals until final silence and darkness. But Blok did not long survive his extinction as Swinburne did at Putney. After devoting his last sensational trick to the Bolsheviks, with his poem *The Twelve*, he vanished into the night of their new bureaucracy until his death in 1921, and was not heard again.

It must be admitted that superficially he had all Yeats's powers of adaptation to new styles and new kinds of sensibility. His *Verses about the Most Beautiful Lady*, a mystical vision of that ideal, could thus easily be turned upside down by him in the bitter puppet play, *Balaganchik*, which Meyerhold made famous, and in *The Stranger*. The latter has a drunken scene in a restaurant well known in Petersburg, with a poet and other characters (the poet, a self-parody, reads out verses to a waiter whose verdict is 'Incomprehensible, but very refined, Sir'). After the poet has been chucked out, a star alights on the Neva Bridge outside and turns into the Beautiful Lady, the stranger, who is indifferent to the poet's ecstatic invocations and mysteries and is anxious only for an earthly caress from a vulgar bourgeois bystander.

Blok's symbols are curiously naïve – nothing could be more so than the figure of Christ found leading the Red Guards at the end of *The Twelve* – but they are undoubtedly impressive: an elemental wind of feeling seems to howl through them. If they are tricks, they do not seem, in some quite uncanny way, to be the poet's own tricks. They come mediumistically out of the hollowness of the poet's being. 'What is written is written, but what it is I do not know.' His verses affected his young contemporaries 'as the moon affects lunatics'. Dr Pyman writes:

> While reciting he appeared to be invested with some absolute authority. If he liked and trusted his audience, however, he would look round questioningly when he had finished, as though asking them to enlighten him on what it all meant. Those who had heard Blok read his poetry found it impossible to listen to it in any other interpretation. According to Bely, Balmont flung down his lines as a duellist his glove, whereas Bryusov presented his 'like a succession of excellently served-up dishes'.

Bely's phrase perfectly describes the dapper little symbolics of Bryusov, and it also reveals the excessive emphasis on recitation in Russian poetry, at this time and up to our own day, an emphasis that easily plays into the hands of facile effect.

Bely and Soloviev, two very determined practical and mystical friends, tried to take over this powerful and not wholly calculable zombie and use him for a figurehead and propagandist for their own peculiar doctrines. Blok, a giant compared to either of the pair, made use of them with his own kind of shrewdness, borrowing ideas about Sophia, the divine wisdom and so forth, but remaining effortlessly independent. However, they all set up together – What a set, what a set, as Matthew Arnold would have said – and the long-suffering Lyubov seems to have had an affair with Bely, with her husband's benevolent encouragement. Drama and despair were sedulously cultivated, 30-page letters written, duels planned and abandoned, eternal renunciations made, to be disrupted by jolly country-house parties a few days later. Yet behind the posturing and the antics, the sense of despair, of boredom, and above all of foreboding and crisis was real enough. Politics at that time and place could fill even symbolists and aesthetes with passionate intensity, and in the 1905 revolution Blok joined the processions carrying a red flag.

At Shakhmatovo Blok showed his other side – humorous, kindly, familial – and wrote some of his richest poetry (*The Earth's Bubbles*: the title is taken from *Macbeth*). Bely and Soloviev were outraged by the apparent cynicism of *Balaganchik* – the Puppet Show – and *The Stranger*, but those apparent apostasies were really all part of their thing, the 'half-baked Petersburg ceremonies' as Dr Pyman rightly calls them; whereas the Shakhmatovo poems have a more solitary and individual feeling, Blok's hollowness reverberating to the wind in the reeds and the croaking of a frog. Invaluable to her thoroughly researched and detailed biography is Dr Pyman's sympathy for the man himself, and for all the aspects of his life which were not concerned with acting a Petersburg part. She is excellent on the family side, and indulgently maternal about her poet's many weaknesses, including his tendency to show off conquests that had not really taken place. A tough lady called Volokhova, who was pleased to be associated with the great poet but kept him dangling, was irritated when he recited poems in which her kisses were showered upon his upturned face. He explained with a shamefaced smile that he meant *sub specie aeternitatis*, or 'sauced up in eternity'.

Dr Pyman's translations are as good as can be, though it is a pity that the originals could not have been added in an appendix. Her second volume will be worth waiting for. But the 'fatal emptiness', as he called it, began to grow on Blok in the last years before the war, and he cannot really have been said to come to terms – in spite of *The Twelve* – with what Anna Akhmatova called the real and not the calendar 20th century. I find it significant that her *Poem Without a Hero*, which is mostly about the doomed Petersburg literary society in which Blok had his being, is none the less magnificently able to join its experience to

Among this week's contributors:

JOHN BAYLEY's publications include *Tolstoy and the Novel* and *Pushkin: A Comparative Commentary*.

IAN HAMILTON is the editor of the *New Review*.

PAUL LANGFORD's books include *The Excise Crisis – Society and Politics in the Age of Walpole* and *British Foreign Policy: The Eighteenth Century*.

JAMES CAMPBELL is the editor of the *New Edinburgh Review*.

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that of the modern age and to make great poetry out of the relation of the two. Such a synthesis would have been beyond Blok. When he attempted it in poetry, in the long poem *Retribution*, begun in 1910 on his father's death, the failure becomes manifest; and his attempts to go on with the poem added to the despair of his last years. If the greatest virtue of a poet, as of any individual, is to be heroic, to rise to the challenge of the time, even of the Soviet iron age they had to live through, and to assert in the face of it their own personal values, the endurance of their own poetic civility, then Akhmatova and Mandelstam must be considered greater poets than Blok.

Morris Fraser

Panic Below

Social Causes of Illness by RICHARD TOTMAN *Souvenir Press* £5.95 and £4.25
The Anxiety Antidote by ROBERT SHARPE and DAVID LEWIS *Souvenir Press* £4.95

The science of human behaviour is no orderly arrangement of facts and conclusions; instead there arrive, from time to time, ripples of comprehension spreading from an elusive centre that seems placed ever further back in our collective history. Consider a few of psychology's most up-to-date discoveries:

Other things being roughly equal, the nastier a treatment the more likely it is to work.

Deeds seen as carried out by free choice confer a unique authority in terms of individual healing.

Infringement of social rules and departures from standards absorbed in childhood are likely to lead to illness, possibly fatal illness.

All are simply echoes of a hundred texts, saws and aphorisms from Grandma back to Athanasius the Greek, and as unconceding as any of them. Here is a fascinating book, distinguished by the elegance of its planning and the rare clarity with which the author sets out and develops his central thesis – that much illness, both physical and emotional, arises from a sustained dissonance between the individual's personal standards for himself and his actual life experience. Illness is not precisely the outcome of disappointment, akin to the 'broken heart' of old melodrama; again, it is not precisely a 'self-destruct' mechanism for the unable or unfulfilled; the reality lies somewhere in between.

Richard Totman, a highly experienced clinical psychologist, proceeds to his thesis from, first, a concise review of ancient healing methods, those of saints, shamans and scorcerers – and then from those of modern 'alternative' medicine and faith healing. He admits that analyses in retrospect provide only a 'shaky basis for making inferences', but at the same time begins to uncover a central theme, a powerful dynamic common to all folk and traditional practices. This is that the benefit to the patient depended heavily on his *emotional commitment to get well.* In practice this commitment covered the widest possible spectrum of nastiness, from merely giving up coffee all the way to douching, pilgrimages, pricking, stabbing, drinking the blood of goats and dancing on live embers at the full moon. He might also, I think, have included the writing of large cheques to psychoanalysts.

The author and his colleagues tested their hypothesis with a group of experiments; they confirmed, for example, that the degree of analgesia resulting from an injection was greater if the student subjects had to make a difficult decision about whether to have it. One result I found particularly intriguing was that an inert placebo was more effective if patients were *told* that it was simply a placebo. This work should be replicated and developed, since it calls into question some fundamental medical beliefs. As clinical students we were given to understand that even the most inert preparation was wonderfully potentiated by a dose of bluff professional self-confidence; now it appears that if instead we expect from the patient some commitment on his own part to recover, we may mobilise internal healing forces of which we still know virtually nothing.

By way of this we reach the author's core hypothesis – that lack of meaning in life, or lack of 'engagement', makes for lost self-esteem and increases the probability of illness. Illness, he says, appears to come from 'a degree of antagonism between normal adaptive biological functions and the censors and restrictions that derive from society'. Each stage is carefully supported by experimental evidence and he proceeds throughout with due caution, in general limiting himself to the 'traditional' psychosomatic diseases such as peptic ulcer and coronary thrombosis. I very much hope, however, that the work will soon extend to cancer and senile dementia. From my own impressions, I think that the answers could be equally rewarding.

Totman's explanation of Seligman's 'learned helplessness' theory is rather muddled, and I wouldn't agree that the direct link between anxiety and an organic lesion has never been experimentally demonstrated; but these are minute points in the light of the author's absorbing re-examination of some vogue concepts in social medicine – loss, stress, 'life events'. 'Loss' does not simply mean the individual's being deprived of an object; it means his being deprived of the significant element *in himself* that was nourished and sustained by the object. 'Stress' is not the mere proximity of an external event, but the sum of the internal incongruities that such an event provokes. A 'life event' thus has no meaning in itself; it requires translation into the highly personal language of each individual. Totman's approach makes nonsense of the grocery-catalogue rating scales that are often used to measure life stress – in which, for example, death of a spouse scores 100 and retirement is about halfway down with 45. One man's retirement can, however, mean separation from all the friends and interests he has known in his life, while another's can bring new and surprising satisfactions.

If behavioural science expands in a series of widening ripples, then mere 'self-help' does so in a succession of partly-closed philosophical loops. One of these is that a sufferer from severe neurosis who could get rid of his symptoms with the aid of nothing more than a book probably wouldn't have got himself into such a mess in the first place. A couple of others occurred to me before I even read *The Anxiety Antidote*. For example, there is the depressing probability that if there was indeed an infallible cure for anxiety ('there *is* an answer!' cry the publishers) someone would have told me about it before now. Then there is the near-certainty that the people who are free of inhibiting anxiety, or who sparkle at cocktail parties and speak fluently in public, just didn't get that way by reading books.

Naturally Sharpe and Lewis offer their own book as the exception – and one must say that their motives and their theoretical basis are both impeccable. I particularly like their use of the ship-at-sea analogy in explaining the biological mechanisms that respond to stress and anxiety: 'panic below', for example, results from the crew in the engine room stoking up the boilers for an emergency that has passed – but which they think is still threatening because of faulty signals from the bridge. Yet, though it is claimed that the authors have helped many anxiety sufferers (and I do not doubt it), it remains to be proven that their techniques work equally well when set out as words on paper. This I very much doubt, as I have for long doubted whether a personality can alter much outside of the therapeutic encounter with another caring individual – that is, without the organic potential of genuine two-way communication. There is nothing here to make me feel differently and behind the endless lists, arrows, boxes and flow-charts, there are exactly the same logical stalemates that confronted us at the outset.

I should think that anyone with the perseverence and self-control to follow some of the programmes through to a conclusion can have very few problems indeed – and the same goes for anyone with the persuasive powers to involve a friend, as suggested, in some of the more picturesque 'exercises'. There is something pathetic about a contraption to quell anxiety consisting of a tray, string and wooden spoon and even more so about one made up of a battery, yellow bulb, wire and worry-egg to let the student 'experience pleasure at will'. I can think of better ways. Further, it is difficult to believe that any reader would thank Sharpe and Lewis for the following insight: 'Bear in mind that other men's organs always look larger than your own because the angle at which you usually look at your own penis tends to foreshorten it.' They are possessed of wondrous innocence to suppose that anyone with this degree of preoccupation would not have found his way to a full-length mirror long since.

Here is a paragraph on what to do about anti-anxiety drugs:

> Consult the practitioner who prescribed the drugs in the first place. Explain that you have learned how to use the natural mechanisms of the body to bring your anxiety responses under control. They will probably suggest that you stop taking the drugs or that you gradually phase them out of your life.

That, if the authors will excuse my saying so, will be the day. I should be delighted to be wrong, of course, and to be addressed by a patient in just that form of words – but I feel sadly certain that these programmes are more likely to promote further self-absorption and to add new anxieties to old ones, so that the reader will end up worrying about getting the exercises right as well as about everything else. Anyone who wants to read this book for information and entertainment could possibly do worse, but anyone who really needs to read it should leave it alone.

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Paul Langford

Round the Maypole

George I: Elector and King by RAGNHILD HATTON *Thames & Hudson* £8.50

The first of Britain's Hanoverian monarchs has a small but well-established niche in the history of his adopted country. Provincial and narrow-minded to a degree, he saw his British dominions as a productive milch-cow, and encouraged his many hangers-on to do the same. His reign was disgraced by corruption in high places and moral degeneracy in low; in particular, in the South Sea Bubble it witnessed a political and financial scandal of exceptional notoriety. He made the name of Hanover despicable in his new kingdom, and when he did not inspire contempt he succeeded only in provoking ridicule.

His personal qualities, indeed, verged on the ludicrous. The two Turkish servants whom he had captured on campaign testified both to his childish delight in his minor military exploits and to his occasionally eccentric sexual habits. His mistresses, whose distinctive physical appearance earned them the title of the Maypole and the Elephant, bore witness to a notable lack of taste even in more conventional kingly activities. Cuckolded early in his marriage with the romantic Sophia Dorothea, he callously murdered her lover, Count Königsmarck, and condemned her to a lifelong immurement in the gloomy palace of Ahlden. This caddish, not to say sinister, behaviour was combined with a dull mind and a boorish manner. The elector's inability to speak English and his impudent refusal to learn it once enthroned proved only incidentally beneficial when this failing induced him to avoid attending ministerial meetings and thereby to establish the principle of cabinet government. Much of his reign he spent at Hanover, and there he fittingly passed away, giving place to a second George whose unpopularity in England was to be almost as great as his own. But for his unexplained patronage of Handel it is an unappealing picture.

It is also, of course, a gross caricature, and one which makes an easy target for a biographer of Professor Hatton's learning and distinction. Her mastery both of the primary sources and the Scandinavian and German literature is as complete as it is assured, and nobody is better qualified to reconstruct the picture, incorporating the new light provided by others, while at the same time adding much of her own. The result is a George I who will never be quite the same for students of English history.

He was, it seems, a conventional but not a contemptible ruler, in his capacity both as Elector of a newly reunited Hanover and as King of Great Britain and Ireland. He had a good mind, an equable temper, and considerable statesmanlike skill. Far from being a bigot and a boor he can be seen as a representative prince of the early Enlightenment, sophisticated and sceptical in matters of religion and ideology, sensitive and open-minded in his appreciation of the arts. The author makes a strong case for this interpretation of her subject. We are reminded that he believed strongly in religious toleration, and was particularly anxious to repeal the laws against religious nonconformity in England. His frequently-cited refusal to continue the practice of touching for the king's evil reflected not an inadequate conviction of his own right to rule but a healthy disrespect for superstition. The mystical attraction of the Stuart Pretenders to many of his British subjects merely aroused in him a slightly incredulous tolerance; he was far readier than his Whig ministers to show mercy to the Jacobite rebels and would simply laugh at stories of the lengths to which his enemies would go to uphold the divine right of kings.

Nor does George I make a poor showing in matters of culture. Professor Hatton has some difficulty in establishing the extent of the King's personal interest in Thornhill's work at Greenwich and St Paul's, but his extensive activity at Kensington, where Kent was employed on the decor and the king himself was closely involved in the landscaping, quite apart from his attention to his first love, Herrenhausen, gives the lie to his supposed dislike of 'boets and bainters'. As for his bizarre court, many of the best stories must be jettisoned.

Mustafa and Mehemet were not captured in battle by their master, nor is there any foundation for the contemporary smear that they were employed for 'abominable uses'. The Maypole, Melusine von der Schulenberg, later Duchess of Kendal, was a shrewd and civilised woman who, with the help of her daughters, provided the king with that affectionate family circle of which Sophia Dorothea's indiscreet behaviour had effectively deprived him. There was talk of a morganatic marriage, but English church law made such a public union dangerous. The Elephant, George's half-sister Sophia Charlotte von Kielmansegg, later Countess of Darlington, may not have been his mistress at all. It is entirely characteristic of him that when a royal confectioner was convicted of spreading the story of an incestuous relationship between the two, the king resisted punishment on the ground that he had been a good pastrycook.

Less easily dissipated is the murky business of his marriage. Even here, however, it is shown that George himself can hardly have been implicated in the murder of Königsmarck, while the imprisonment of his divorced wife turns out to be not a tale of Gothic barbarity but a relatively civilised affair involving a comfortable style of life, freedom to ride out in her carriage, and visits by family and friends. It is also the case that, as king, George I learned to use English with adequate clarity and skill (a perfectly constructed memorandum in English is cited), and, most importantly of all, attended Cabinet meetings throughout his reign. Finally, the stream of

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The work must have been published in the UK, either in a newspaper, periodical or pamphlet in the preceding year. For the 1979 award any article or pamphlet which appeared in 1978 will be eligible. The judges will be looking for originality, literary merit and expressive power.

The winner of the 1978 award was Paul Bailey for his article THE LIMITATIONS OF DESPAIR, first published in *The Listener*. The following were shortlisted for the 1978 award: Conor Cruise O'Brien, Shiva Naipaul and E P Thompson.

The following have agreed to serve on the panel of judges this year:

Lord Boyle (chairman) **Dan Jacobson**
Francis Wyndham **David Watt**
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corruption traditionally associated with the clutch of Hanoverians who accompanied George to England is plausibly reduced to a genteel trickle acceptable by the lax standards of Whig government.

This is a refreshing, and on the whole convincing, revision of the traditional portrait. It is possible, however, to push the revision too far, and probable that the author does so in the case of some of her bolder judgments. For if Professor Hatton is very much at home in the world of late 17th-century continental diplomacy, she is less so in that of British politics. Her brief account of political structure in England is sketchy and also inaccurate, and her claims for George's superior statesmanship are open to considerable doubt. If it is the case, for example, that as king he set out to create a moderate governing party which would depend neither on Whigs or Tories, he was singularly unsuccessful, for he quickly became a prisoner of the Whigs, and at times of a section of the Whigs. His master plan to solve the political problems created at his accession to the British throne, by separating the Hanoverian and British lines of succession, was admittedly enterprising in conception and would have achieved what was not in the event to be accomplished – and then by chance – until Queen Victoria's accession.

Not all, then, are likely to agree that George I was 'the most competent and politically imaginative, of his line. But in rescuing him from the hands of the caricaturists and establishing him as an example of sensible if not inspired early 18th-century kingship, Professor Hatton has done history as well as George I a service.

Jonathan Keates

Quenchless

Peake's Progress: Selected Writings and Drawings of Mervyn Peake edited by Maeve Gilmore *Allen Lane* £8.50

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner illustrated by MERVYN PEAKE *Chatto* £2.95

1968, the year of the Paris *événements* and the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia, was the year when I failed to finish *Titus Groan*. I tried very hard, manfully swallowing that awful title ('Vespasian Shriek' or 'Nero Shudder' would have done as well) and gulping down names like Flay and Lord Sepulchrave – but it was no use. Added to the fact that the 'Gormenghast' novels were so obviously the longed-for replacement for Tolkien, part of the wave of late-Sixties floral-patterned infantilism (of which *Watership Down* is an insidious vestige) there was the unwelcome sensation of reading something by an author who couldn't really write, and whose true métier clearly lay elsewhere. A decade later this feeling persists: it is not that Peake doesn't savour words and respond to certain obvious literary influences, or that he fails to exercise the same potent, haunted imagination which established his deserved success as an illustrator. The truth is that language won't do what he wants, that cliché, orotundity and vagueness keep getting in the way, and the result is curiously gawky and shambling, like one of the knobbly, stringy figures in his drawings.

This latest bulky anthology of ungathered pieces, edited by his widow, has the additional interest of being readable as an autobiography. Almost the best thing it contains is, indeed, Peake's own skeleton account of his boyhood as a missionary's son in northern China, at Tientsin Grammar School ('Its windows were mouths that shouted "I know I'm ugly and I like it"') and Shanghai ('a frozen, icy, tinkling horror of mules and motor cars, western houses, and narrow, banner-hung hovel streets'). Rough and unforced, his description of travelling by night in a cart along a mountain road among camel and mule caravans has an intensity altogether lacking from the more self-consciously polished prose extracts.

We are also reminded that he wrote verse. Who, for Christ's sake, doesn't? None of these poems is especially good, and even the nonsense verses fail to transcend the level of the merely nonsensical to create an independent logic. Much, including the once admired 'The Cocky Walkers', now has the mournful interest of the yellowing newspaper cuttings which occasionally drop out of old books. The idiom in nearly every case belongs less to its author than to the period or to the mass of eagerly absorbed reading which underlies it. For a taste, read the four poems on painters written during the early Fifties, so strangely redolent, in words like 'graved', 'enswathen', 'quenchless' and 'thieven', of a Pater and Meredith world of High Art drawing rooms.

Precisely the same suggestion of a modified fin-de-siècle aestheticism, of words as things somehow precious and brittle, which might come to pieces if not reverently handled, clings to the longer poems 'A Reverie of Bone' and 'The Rhyme of the Flying Bomb'. The first, a versified 'Urne Buriall', relates directly to Peake's preoccupation as a

Six of One

a new novel by

Rita Mae Brown

author of

Ruby Fruit Jungle

'the single most incendiary novel to have emerged from the Women's Movement' – *New Times*

Rita Mae Brown uses the small world of Runnymede, a town on the Pennsylvania-Maryland border, to explore universal feelings, particularly between women. Holding the centre of the stage is the love-hate relationship between two sisters, Julia (Juts) and Louise (Wheezie) as they grow up, marry, raise their families and enter old age. She assembles a truly glorious cast of characters, who both conform to and defy convention and in the time-span of three generations she deals both movingly and humorously with the nature of passionate and platonic love.

£5.50

WH Allen

This English

We suspect that the compositors have had a hand in our first two entries this week (perhaps Mr Richmond's howler heralds the return of the elongated 's'); but they are both too good to miss. Next comes a perfect 'misattribution' and two duff headlines. (Actually, the judge said that drunkenness was 'a matter of regret'; so it must have been the headline-writer who was drowning his sorrows.)

☐ What a pity church attendance has become so unfashionable. The other Sunday I was struck by the gaiety with which the congregation debauched on to the street. **Rachel Billington** *Evening Standard* (Joan Kennedy)

☐ Instead of considering ineffective power or capacity limits as a fop to the anti-motor cycling brigade . . . **Dave Richmond** *Motor Cycle Weekly* (Julian Wells)

☐ For instance, evidence submitted to the Royal Commission on the NHS attributes fatigue, long hours and mental strain to the high suicide rates in the profession. *British Medicine* (Dr M. Long)

☐ Lord's Defeat Starts Bingham Inquiry Row **Headline** *Guardian* (R. F. Carter)

☐ Drunkenness 'Regretful' **Headline** *East Anglian Daily Times* (David Ealey)

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draughtsman with the ridges and angles of the human physique. The second, frankly imitative in form and style of 'The Ballad of Reading Gaol', is nearly successful as a concentrated evocation of London's experience of wartime bombardment. Both, like practically everything else Peake ever wrote, are portentous, hyper-literary, magniloquent and ultimately empty of life.

Nor indeed are the plays and stories much better. The enormous verse play *The Wit to Woo* flopped at the Arts Theatre in 1957, for reasons, alas, easy to appreciate. Its satirical aims get quickly lost in thickets of arch jocularity and the pacing of the dialogue is simply amateurish throughout. Among the longer prose pieces is the potentially absorbing 'Boy In Darkness', a sub-species of *Titus Groan*, in which the characters and action are heavily allegorical, but here too intention flouts technique. A clutch of short stories conveys an identical urge to get over the hurdles of style, narrative rhythms and character-drawing, in order to make the point before it escapes absolutely.

Exactly what Peake was good at emerges at once in the illustrative material drawn from his sketches. Here, and in the splendidly brooding plates accompanying *The Ancient Mariner*, full of misty cross-hatching, hollow eyes, knotty fingers and toes, lies an ample justification for having left much of *Peake's Progress* unpublished. As an artist with brush and pencil, nothing comes between him and his subject: the medium is triumphantly established as his own. As a writer he can never break out of an enduring awkwardness with words, as though his hands were grasping bunches of them in a desperate effort to make them carry his ideas. His true poetry was visual: his place as a literary figure is with interesting Gothick failures like Lord de Tabley and Thomas Lovell Beddoes. More vividly than others of its kind this anthology reminds us that a *violon d'Ingres* can sometimes prove a ukulele.

James Campbell

New Dealer

Dos Passos and the Fiction of Despair by IAIN COLLEY *Macmillan* £8.95

E. E. Cummings, who was Dos Passos' close friend for many years, claimed that he never bothered to read his books because they were all made up of extèrnals. To say the same thing in a kinder fashion, one could describe Dos Passos as a novelist who derived his subject and tone from the dynamism of social change, focusing on the ordinary people who benefit least from whatever development happens to take place. Whichever way you see it, it is a fact that John Dos Passos has come to occupy a less than honoured place in the catalogue of American letters. The days are gone when his name would roll from the tongue as freely as those of Hemingway, Fitzgerald and Faulkner.

Are they likely to return? Iain Colley believes that they should. Dos Passos, he urges, is a spokesman not only for his own time but for all time:

> Dos Passos is not simply an authentic member of the Lost Generation but a writer who has been as eloquent as any . . . in expressing what it means to lose and be lost.

The most interesting feature of Colley's method is his use of scientific terminology to describe the 'typical feeling' of Dos Passos' work: 'entropic despair' pervades his writing, while the movement of *Manhattan Transfer* is compared to Brownian Motion: 'The characters in the novel, like the ball-bearings in the official model of Brownian Motion, have no sense of explanation for their conduct or their fates.' It is not merely jargon but a serious

Craig Raine

Oberfeldwebel Beckstadt

The steel works at Bremen
founder on the horizon

like an injured battleship.
It is the end of the war

and Oberfeldwebel Beckstadt
hasn't had time to shave.

A thousand feet above,
the camp is a crown of thorns

and above that, out of sight,
the castle's ruined endgame.

It is the end of the war
and Oberfeldwebel Beckstadt

unscrews his silencer.
Unteroffizieren slop petrol

from two jerry-cans over the bodies
and climb into the truck.

He will say he cannot remember
how the Jews were like sheep

peeled by their shearers
and trembling in their pith,

how the grave looked innocent
as an emptied pond, how

he forgot to light the match,
how it almost seemed real . . .

It is the end of the war
and back at the camp

lanugo graces the lupin pods.
Four Jews are playing bowls –

gravely they herd together
the giant droppings.

It is time to go home
to a wife in curlers

like a barrister,
who will ask him questions,

call him Otto
and make him cry.

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attempt to relate the structure of the fiction to the era of scientific and technological advance which determined its subject matter by creating the necessary conditions for the multiplication of the industrial and capitalist hydra. It was probably Dos Passos' most successful experiment. Others, like the three additional devices employed in *USA* to remind the reader that he is dealing with a 'chronicle' (Dos Passos' word for his fiction) are self-consciously artificial and now seem dated when set beside the contemporary work of Joyce and Faulkner. Beneath the colourful prose, the clever juxtapositions and the unorthodox typography, little remains to support the edifice: like a film-set facade where you walk through the front door only to discover that there is no interior.

The early Dos Passos was an attempt to bridge idealism and despair in a romantic idiom inflected by Fitzgerald and Eliot. Although the pessimism had not the authority of a mature world view, being closer to adolescent frustration, at least one book of the period, *Three Soldiers,* remains an interesting attempt to write 'the novel' of World War I. It was in that novel that Dos Passos first exhibited what Mr Colley terms his 'engrammatic' quality: 'the unheroic wearing away of the human spirit by an accumulation of petty sufferings and defeats', which achieved its fullest realisation in *USA*.

Half of the study is devoted to discussion of *USA* and *Manhattan Transfer,* and Mr Colley is wise to sacrifice only one chapter to all the fiction which followed Dos Passos' conversion to the weird, flag-waving Republicanism which led him to condemn the New Deal as evil on the grounds that it was bound to lead to 'English socialism'. As a novel of the machine age, *USA* displays its wages, its ruthlessness, its treacherousness on a grand scale, often with considerable force. Those who adapt – like J. Ward Moorehouse – are superficially saved but lose spiritual direction, whereas those who oppose are destroyed and whoever ignores or is unaware is swept away. The little man is 'free' only within the compound of the capitalist dragon; meanwhile his hopelessness increases and further gratifies its infinite desire.

Dos Passos, however, was far from being a marxist and this book helps to dispel that persistent falsehood. *USA*, the author tells us, 'is not informed by the global philosophy of Marxism, but by a view of human existence as ultimately planless'. But, he warns, there is a difference between 'an adolescent feeling that the world is hopelessly wrong and an artistically formed pessimism'. So there is, but that phrase 'artistically formed pessimism' is worrying, especially when applied to Dos Passos. It suggests the durability of a world view which has been questioned over and over until found fit to hold, whereas the vision of Dos Passos could not withstand the temptation of a transplant of sympathies to rescue it from blind despair.

Dos Passos, as Colley tells us, is not in agreement with Hemingway that 'a man can be destroyed but not defeated', for the defeats inflicted on his characters are complete. Yet that is why even his major fiction lacks the resonance of his great contemporaries. The 'fiction of despair' it is, but despair without its necessary corollary, if it is to have significance in human or even artistic terms, endurance. Dos Passos failed to shape his pessimism into a usable tool, where Hemingway, Fitzgerald and Henry Miller – perhaps the true novelist of the 1930s – succeeded.

Curiously absent from the book is any analysis of the wider cultural and political arena of Twenties America and Europe which gives Dos Passos' fiction its flavour. A writer who is 'instinctively drawn to the side of the governed and exploited, dealing with men in society, choosing as his protagonists men who lose hope and fail' would have benefited from some attention paid to the field on which the battle is being fought. In a study which devotes considerable space to re-telling the stories of Dos Passos' novels, the twin poles of his radicalism – Sacco-Vanzetti and the New Deal – merit only half-a-dozen mentions between them.

Philip Purser

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Ian Hamilton

The Old Pro

J. B. Priestley by JOHN BRAINE *Weidenfeld* £5.95

'This book is in no sense a critical analysis of the work of J. B. Priestley,' boasts John Braine in his foreword. Presumably what he means is that this is not an 'academic' work, that we ought not therefore to think ill of him if he fails to 'cover the ground', or if in the course of the various plot synopses he's about to embark on we fail to detect symptoms of intelligent discrimination. This kind of thing, as he frequently points out, is better left to 'pygmies' and 'pundits'. Braine's approach is bluffly pro to pro:

> As a writer I know what it's like down there in the blood and sand. I may have not fought as long as Priestley or have won so many fights but I have survived. I am a professional.

And here's the bond that matters. The word 'professional' crops up well over a dozen times throughout the book, and each time we are reminded that it really does take one to know one:

> I speak as one whose experience has taken me out of the dining room where many critics and most literary historians may be found, into the kitchen where the dinners are cooked.

Dinners are usually for diners, and get sent back if the cook makes a mess of them, but this isn't really what Braine means. He is adamant that pros like him (and Priestley) don't write for anyone but themselves, are contemptuous of critics and indifferent to commercial gain, and cavalier in their dealings with those who publish them:

> To be under an obligation to anyone – even, for instance, the most enlightened of publishers – is to diminish one's freedom, to speak with someone else's voice rather than one's own.

But this isn't quite what he means either. Defending Priestley (and, we deduce, himself) against the charge of having made profits from his work, Braine confides:

> A professional writer must be paid just as any other professional man must be paid. In any case, if what he has written isn't worth paying for, it isn't worth writing.

So much, it might be thought, for the 'sheer joy of creation' which Braine elsewhere names as 'absolutely the only motive compelling enough to make one write any novel'.

Well, whatever he means, there is no question but that what Braine most admires about Priestley is the sheer amount of stuff he has turned out. There are frequent awed accounts here of how many words were written in how many months (or weeks), and many a slavering tribute to the senior pro's largeness, his boundless energy, his superhuman dedication, and so on. Also attached are statistics about sales figures and the number of performances achieved by Priestley's various plays. But when it comes to persuading us that the work itself is of more than ordinary merit, Braine slumps to an almost insultingly elementary level of schoolroom exegesis: Priestley sometimes describes things from above, sometimes

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from within, he refrains from using minor characters as mere ciphers, and so on. Indeed, Braine says nothing in praise of Priestley's wonderful technique that couldn't be fairly said of any normally competent story-teller. And he says it as if he is addressing ten-year-olds:

> There is no one in *The Good Companions* who is not described, just as there is no place which is not described. If any one appears, however briefly, if only behind a bar or a counter or delivering a letter, we register their appearance as we would in real life, we notice what they say and how they say it as we would in real life.

There is a biographical element in Braine's book, but here too the shoddiness is fairly shameless. Thus, for example, we read on page 11 that Priestley rejected the idea of going to university, and left school at 15 in order to enter the wool trade. Braine applauds this choice: 'Oxbridge,' he says, 'would have cut him off from the real world. It was then – it still is even now – the world of the scholar and the gentleman, of the enclosed garden.' We are then told how Priestley left the wool firm in 1914 to join up, was wounded, gassed and finally discharged in 1919. Chapter One ends with this last piece of information. The first sentence of Chapter Two reads: 'Priestley took his degree in modern history and political science at Trinity Hall Cambridge in 1921'. Not a word about what made him go there, what his university years were like, and apparently no memory of having said that Oxbridge would surely stunt his budding talent. And this is the general rule. We get enough biographical information (much of it drawn from Norman Collins) to make us curious, and then some huge gap, or indeed some development in Priestley's life which seems puzzling or contradictory. Then silence. Braine at one point announces that Priestley (like Braine) is immensely reticent about his personal affairs; but the omissions in his book seem arbitrary – as if the truth was that Braine simply never bothered to find out.

Also to be tolerated every dozen or so pages are mini-lectures on the Art of Writing – again of stunning banality: 'The true novelist never explains . . . he *shows*', 'Long novels, all other things being equal, are better than short novels'. And, needless to say, many a distempered aside about the Welfare State – the wisdom and forcefulness of these can be summarised by one of Braine's remarks about the character Golspie in *Angel Pavement*. Golspie, it will be remembered, is a free-enterprise rogue, forever doing shady deals and betraying those who trust him. Braine's comment is: 'There are still predators like Golspie (though Golspie will be in the public sector now).'

John Braine's matey, almost collaborative attitude to Priestley is almost enough to put one off his work for life. It's just as well, therefore, that Heinemann have added him to their series of three-novels in one volume: chosen by Priestley himself, the re-issues are *Angel Pavement*, *Bright Day*, and *St Michael and Sir George*.

NEXT WEEK

John Jones on Turgenev, Phillip Whitehead on Broadcasting, Hugh Lloyd-Jones on Pythagoras

Michael Mason

Address Books

Dog Days in Babel by PHILIP THODY *Wildwood House* £5.95
Slipping Away by ELIZABETH TROOP *Granada* £4.50
Shosha by ISAAC BASHEVIS SINGER *Cape* £4.95
Mortal Friends by JAMES CARROLL *Macdonald & Jane's* £6.95

Take the two British novels on this list and put them beside the two foreign ones – and the effect is pretty dispiriting. All four are parochial or insular books in the sense that their business is transacted in definite and restricted geographical settings. The difference is that these terms require their full weight of disparagement in the case of the two British books. The only reader who could find any interest in them would have to be British and middle-class – and preferably a Londoner in early middle-age.

It's not easy to say what makes for the bad kind of parochialism. The setting of Philip Thody's *Dog Days in Babel* is not much more cramped than that of the Singer novel, but the British book is immeasurably narrower in feeling. It concerns the mildly funny activities of an assortment of hard-to-keep-apart-in-the-mind characters in London (middle-class Brits plus two Sellers-like foreigners) during the hot summer of 1976. One cause of narrowness is that Mr Thody is partly just writing *about* such things as Daks trousers, Luton airport, UCCA forms, and the Abbey National, as if, preposterously, they were interesting in themselves. And then the paraphernalia of middle-class London is heavily relied on to convey meaning. Characters are defined by their Daks trousers, and the rest. This is the cocktail-party school of characterisation.

Mr Thody would perhaps retort that many great comic novels have had narrowly English settings. One of his characters muses overpointedly, 'Novel writing reached its peak in the English comic tradition exemplified by Evelyn Waugh and the early Aldous Huxley'. But Waugh's and Huxley's comedies are turned outwards from their parochial worlds. Mr Thody is not a man of narrow culture. He is Professor of French at Leeds, but even his allusions to French writers are a little jaunty and condescending. This sometimes recalls Kingsley Amis, a writer in the 'English comic tradition' whom Mr Thody obviously admires. But there is a great gulf fixed between them in writing ability, and even in writing ambition. Mr Thody is one of those novelists who abdicates linguistic responsibility by turning over large tracts of his text to conversations or soliloquy-like musings by his characters.

Elizabeth Troop abdicates her linguistic responsibility by having a lot of dialogue, and also by using an almost aggressively meagre vocabulary and syntax. So the cultural allusions with which her novel abounds are coarsened in a way that is presumably intended to be rather bold and funny: 'Well I'm buggered, she thought, I never knew Tom read Wittgenstein.' Much of the book reads like tutorial work by Glenda Slagg for the Open University's Foundation Arts Course. As with Mr Thody, the point of view is insular in a bad sense ('canny old Sartre' comes in for his share of head-patting), and English matters (Dulux emulsion, 90% mortgages, HP sauce) are dwelt on fondly and used to define character.

Actually, *Slipping Away* is doubly parochial, since its primary setting is Tuscany and the English material comes in through reminiscence. The heroine Claudia, the thinking man's Glenda Slagg, is on holiday in a rented farmhouse near Siena with her emotionally estranged film-director husband and others (they all get killed in a car-crash on the penultimate page). The Tuscan equivalents of Dulux emulsion are nevertheless abundantly present – chiefly in the form of names of Italian foodstuffs embedded in paragraphs of

P. N. Furbank

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gastronomese. This is the insularity of the outsider.

Isaac Bashevis Singer said in an interview some years ago that 'in writing there is no such thing as being an internationalist or a cosmopolitan . . . literature must have an address'. This is the remark of a writer concerned about the international perspective, yet conscious that it must not be sought in straightforward ways. Elsewhere he has been explicit that the local 'address' can be a writer's route to internationalism:

> He must feel that he writes for people who know everything he knows. It's only when you write for your own people and when you don't think about anybody else that the other people will appreciate your work and like it.

Of course the paradox is not as sharp as it may sound. Singer is now very remote, in time and space, from the Polish address of most of his fiction, and some of its most familiar components are not things which are 'known' in the ordinary sense at all. Ms Troop may be applying Dulux emulsion at this very moment, but Singer is certainly not encountering a *dybbuk*.

So it will be interesting to see if *Shosha* pleases the international audience. It is in the naturalistic vein of *The Family Moskat*, and more autobiographical, more to do with what Singer himself has known, than any of the other novels published in English. It concerns a young Yiddish writer, Aaron Greidinger, living in Warsaw in the 1930s, whose story entwines intriguingly with the facts of Singer's own life. At some points the imitation is approximate, at others startlingly faithful. Aaron is born on Krochmalna Street, thus inhabiting the literal 'address' of the young Singer. Shosha of the title is the physically retarded childhood sweetheart of the hero (perhaps a victim of the *encephalitis lethargica* epidemic, though the disease is not specified) whom he marries and stays with in Warsaw despite a blossoming reputation abroad and the chance of escape from Poland.

Aaron's action clearly has to do with Singer's own renunciation of the international but, suggestively, this fable of commitment to a literary address does not sustain its shapeliness. In a disconcerting 'Epilogue' it turns out that Aaron, now a successful writer visiting Israel in the 1950s, did flee from Poland and that Shosha died on the journey. Or so he believes. A careful reader will wonder about the unnamed person whom Aaron has arranged to meet on the day after the narrative closes – and perhaps recall that Singer's first wife settled in Israel after the war.

Mortal Friends is a book that errs a bit too much on the side of internationalism in dealing with its parochial settings: Ireland and Boston. Mr Carroll glances over his shoulder at the international audience most obviously in the blatantly 'researched' Irish episodes:

> The Customs House . . . was the work of the old Anglo-Irish Ascendancy, who were firmly ensconced in Dublin by the late eighteenth century . . . When the Customs House was built in 1791 Dublin was just coming into its own as the Second City of the Empire . . .

And so on. You won't catch Mr Carroll writing as if his audience knows anything he knows. But this is not an important issue about his book. *Mortal Friends* is a substantial and entertaining novel-cum-thriller about an Irish family that rises to power in Boston – a respectable successor to *The Godfather* in the genre the latter created.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Benedict Nightingale

In the Shark Tank

A Fair Quarrel *Olivier*
Brimstone and Treacle *Open Space*
Tommy *Queens*

A Fair Quarrel comes from the theatrical cartel that left us *The Changeling*: Middleton once more concentrating on the main plot, a shrilly chivalric tale about a young officer untruly told by the mother whose honour he is defending in a duel that she actually was the 'whore' his enemy branded her; Rowley being generally credited with the sub-plot, in which a poor little rich girl, clandestinely married to a man her father has unjustly had imprisoned for debt, is pursued both by a sexually avaricious doctor and by a caricature wooer from caricature Cornwall. Add some burlesque fun at the expense of bawds, tobacco-freaks and (especially) the 'roarers', shoddy-chic swaggerers who could have taught the Stretford End something in vocal virulence, and you have something very near to a textbook illustration of disunity of action.

Yet the play proved very popular in its day, and was acclaimed a full two centuries later by no less an authority than Charles Lamb, who compared its 'vigorous passions, virtues clad in flesh and blood, and beauty and truth of moral feeling' with the insipidities of his contemporaries. The question is, how has it worn since then, how weathered 150 years in which rapiers and pistols have been definitively replaced by strained silences in the club bar and stately little contretemps in the columns of *The Times*?

The answer may perhaps be found in the panicky fumblings at the National last week, as the audience did its best to discover from the programme notes just what rules the heroic Captain Ager was obeying when he refused to defend his mother's chastity, only to pluck out his sword with a cry of 'heaven has pitied my excessive patience' when he was accused of cowardice. There are, of course, other plays of the approximate period whose attitudes to the law of arms and honour in general are hard to appreciate. Who nowadays understands precisely why Sir Andrew Aguecheek's challenge to Viola is to be regarded as 'excellently ignorant'? Who can say with perfect confidence whether or not there is gratuitous cruelty in Claudio's rejection of the supposedly impure Hero, or whether it is reasonable for Beatrice to expect Benedick to fight him in retaliation? But these anxieties do not matter greatly, because in both cases there is plenty of play left to grasp and enjoy. Unluckily, they penetrate the very heart of *A Fair Quarrel*.

Things are not much helped by Nicky Henson's short-back-and-sides Ager. The conscientious anguish which so moved Lamb becomes a series of posturing attitudes struck with mottled face, quivering chin and slightly aslant back, and the character himself turns into a public-school Mussolini lording it over the locker room. Consequently, the audience laughed when the Jacobeans would proba have curled their lips the other way, a stayed mum at moments the Jacobeans mi well have found amusing: for instance, wl Ager stuns his seconds by his studied pol ness to the raging braggart who has j proclaimed him a bastard. Not until the can most of us have got our moral bearir By then it was evident that Middleton – author, as it happens, of a pamphlet attack duelling – was exposing the absurdities pseudo-principled conflict and promoting virtues of forgiveness, reconciliation a peace. But up to that point much was con sion and bewilderment and desperate fiddl with one's inner compass. One felt rather a Jacobean might have done, had he been p sented with a prolonged argument about rights and wrongs of secondary picketing.

The main pleasure the piece offers is, update Polonius, comical-historical-soc logical. The Cornish oaf, Chough, and clownish manservant, Trimtram, are early stances of that figure the Restoration and 1 century found so irresistible, the rural in cent floundering in the metropolitan sha tank. What gives them their originality is th conversion into eager if amateurish roari boys, genially bellowing 'bronstrops', 'twe 'hippocrene', 'sindicus' and other imaginat insults at the uncomprehending citizenry. I this cannot, of course, justify the play a whole. Nor do the energetically gormless p formances of Mark Wing-Davey and Pet Hugo Daly as the twin twits seem much m of a justification for William Gaskill's prod tion, itself marooned on stark, scrubl boards that do something for the play's clar nothing for its period atmosphere. Moreov two or three of the supporting parts, and least one of the larger-than-supporting, pretty woodenly played. The Natio Theatre's forays into the drama's mustier a hives have proved rewarding in the past a will surely do so again; but this time triun must be ceded to the cobwebs.

'Brimstone' is represented in Dennis P ter's television-turned-stage play by a sata young creep who trails a vague stench match-tops but is much more dependent cheque-books and credit-cards than any qu fied demon ought to be. He wangles his v into a suburban house in which a ro accident victim lies vegetating, tearfu looked after by a mother whose mind a manner are presumably to be summed up 'treacle'. What follows is, I think, supposec demonstrate the sanctimonious guises adopts, the vulnerability to it of the unawa and, more interestingly but controvertibly, paradoxical tendency to defeat itself. Mou ing revivalist platitudes, Mr Brimstone ra the helpless girl, only to see the trau restore her to her wits. He inveigles the pa noid Mr Treacle, an embryonic Natio Fronter, further and further into Hitle fantasy, only to shock him back to a kind

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dazed decency. In the end this somewhat incompetent devil is obliged to scamper off into outer darkness, leaving behind a healthier, wiser household.

Obviously, this is not the pointlessly disgusting piece the BBC grandees pronounced it when they rejected it for showing three years ago. The real objection is an artistic one, that there's a certain patronising predictability in Potter's handling of the hidebound father, and especially of the housebound mother, whose tiny wits are quite turned by the three diabolic temptations that come to brighten her wilderness: a shopping trip, a stint at the hairdressers, an afternoon at the flicks. An attack on prejudice and second-hand feeling comes more persuasively from a writer who hasn't himself allowed such things to slant his observation. Perhaps it would all have seemed subtler if we'd been permitted to watch pupils dilating and follicles twitching on the small screen. As it is, Margery Mason's dumpy, doughy wife, George Cole's glum, huddled husband, and Richard O'Callaghan's smirking intruder give the evening a kind of macabre fascination; but not quite life.

That, along with sense and logic, is a commodity mainly missing from the stage version of The Who's *Tommy*, about a vegetable turned pinball superstar turned Messianic crucifixee. I suspect it needed a Ken Russell, or even *the* Ken Russell, to lift it to the level of inventive extravagance that would make such criticisms seem niggling. Lacking him, the thing pounds hectically at the ear and flamboyantly at the eye, but left me, for one, feeling totally untouched, like a wallflower in Purgatory.

Opera

Peter Conrad

Cross Purposes

L'Incoronazione di Poppea *Paris Opéra*
Eugene Onegin *Covent Garden*

In opera, music generally works to resolve or submerge dramatic antagonisms. The fact that all the characters sing is more important than any contrareity or conflict between them which the drama might foment. Music is the compulsory community to which they belong, and they join it at the cost of their dramatic individuality. This is why all operatic characters seem the same. As Auden says, they are all monsters of captious will, and this common psychological affliction they owe to a musical necessity, for singing is an act of will, a ruthless victory over human limitation. Monteverdi's *Poppea* is, however, an exception. Until the final duet, music doesn't succeed in equalising characters or in mollifying drama. There are a dozen characters in *Poppea*, and they are all different. Recitative respects the differences, adapting itself to the sensual insinuations of Poppea, the dangerous instability of Nero, the confused vacillations of Ottone, the complaining formality of Ottavia, the prosing sententiousness of Seneca, and the cheery practicality of Drusilla.

Poppea is energised by the contradictions between characters, like a Shakespeare play in which tragic solipsism is controverted by comic opportunism, or comic fecklessness by tragic pain. Every character is contradicted by every other. In the prologue, a demarcation dispute is fought out in heaven, as Amor, Fortuna and Virtu squabble over their respective claims on their human subjects. Ottone contradicts himself, instantaneously transferring his affections from Poppea to Drusilla. Ottavia flinches from her nurse's glib erotic persuasion, and from Seneca's consolatory philosophy. Seneca's disciples comically contradict his tragic resolution to die, reneging on their stoical principles and pleading that life is too agreeable to be extinguished. Nero, accustomed to absolute power, is maddened by the spirit of contradiction which prevails in the opera, first in his argument with Seneca and later when Ottone and Drusilla contradict each other, comically vying to claim responsibility for the assault on Poppea. The order of the scenes is planned as a quizzical alternation between tragic sacrifice and comic revenge. Seneca's death is followed by Nero's orgy, Ottavia's exile from Rome by Arnalta's social promotion. Love for some is a tragic principle of integrity and devotion, for others a comic license of appetite. Ottavia loves Rome, but Nero loves only Poppea; the idyllic sensual delight Nero and Poppea share together is contradicted by the brasher emotions of their inferiors – the page skirmishing with his girl in the garden, the guards for whom love is a professional inconvenience, which obliges them to spend the nights uncomfortably on duty outside Poppea's house.

Gunther Rennert's production in Paris intelligently emphasises these contradictions by fragmenting the work: black-outs between scenes disrupt continuity, and aim each episode inimically against those before and after it. In this pitiless opera, even the victims are alienated from each other. Poppea's ascent requires the exclusion first of Seneca and then of Ottavia, but Monteverdi insists on the differences between their fates, not on their commiserative similarity. Ottavia has no use for Seneca's stoicism, which invites defeat in order to exult in it. Seneca welcomes death because it enables him to practise the virtue he extols. Suicide is a school-room demonstration for the benefit of his pupils. In contrast with his loquacity, Ottavia is self-sentenced to a mortifying silence. In her first monologue she berates herself for having dared to express her outrage, and in her second she laments that misery has deprived her of words to commemorate her departure from Rome. All fates are single, solitary and inconsolable. Drusilla's minimal chance of happiness is to share Ottone's banishment. Arnalta intends to enjoy her new privileges, but confides that although she will relish the cozening of flatterers, they won't deceive her: she knows the gloomy truth about herself.

Ructions with the unions obliged the Opéra to present *Poppea* without scenery, but the work's bleakness suits a bare stage. The only setting needed is a chair and a couch, which are the symbolic trophies of Poppea's progress: she covets the throne, and acquires it by her proficiency in bed. For the rest, the draughty stage is furnished by the gesticulatory intensity of a remarkable cast. Christa Ludwig is a distraught Ottavia, fiercely tending her hatred, and John Macurdy a grave, inflexible Seneca. Jon Vickers and Gwyneth Jones conspire to exculpate Nero and Poppea by singing gloriously and acting with subtle psychological acuity. Vickers as Nero is not a psychotic monster but a stern and sagacious ruler weakened by his susceptibility to Poppea and vindictive when piqued. Vickers confers on Nero some of his own endearing childishness. Inside the tyrant is a fractious infant, goaded to fury by contradictions of his whim. When Seneca defies him, Vickers gives an alarming demonstration of stubbornness growing murderous: he sets that jutting jaw, clenches that boulder of a fist, and scowls like a thunder-cloud. Imperious with others, he is humble and helpless with Poppea. He cradles his head on her much-touted breasts, and kneels worshipfully before her. In his appeasement of her he is like a parent demoralised by love, unable to deny a favour to his querulous offspring: Seneca and Ottavia are his offerings to her.

Dazzlingly embodied by Gwyneth Jones, Poppea is not a cynical whore but an amoral child, inflamed by her reflection in the mirror. She gets her way by the childish technique of wheedling insistence, and retreats into sullenness when contradicted by Arnalta. Her innocent carnality is matched by the inane romping of Nero as he celebrates Seneca's death: Vickers smooches with Lucan, prances on stilts, and tumbles like an inebriate baby in orange combinations, a crown of grapes askew on his head. This orgy takes place in a nursery. Vickers and Jones establish an emotional parity between Nero and Poppea, which makes their relationship more than an expedient alliance. They advance through scenes of disagreement and recrimination towards the lyrical unison of the finale, which is slowly and softly sung as they edge closer, safe at last inside their sensual dream. Dramatically, the opera is a succession of abrasive contradictions; but musically, the accord between Nero and Poppea solemnised in 'Pur ti miro, pur ti godo' suppresses contradiction and overcomes our moral reluctance.

For the demotic characters in *Poppea*, love is a lubricious itch. For Drusilla, it is a noble lost cause. For Poppea, it is an exertion of power over others. For Amor, the ubiquitous cupid of the prologue, it is a profession. The characters of *Eugene Onegin* wisely learn to survive by ceasing to believe in it. Tatyana's mother and her nurse sing the praises of custom, habit and domestic routine. Olga recommends flighty shallowness, and Gremin's aria defends love as companionship, not sexual attraction. Tatyana, writing her letter to Onegin, wills a fantasy to come true, but her will can't coerce an indifferent actuality, and she outgrows her expectation that life can be made to resemble an opera. *Onegin* is as episodic as *Poppea* (Tchaikovsky called it a set of 'lyric scenes' rather than an opera), and like *Poppea* its discontinuous structure implies

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its sad dramatic conviction that life won't be redeemed or amended by musical yearnings. The casualty in *Onegin* is Lensky, who dies needlessly because he insists on behaving wilfully, which is to say behaving operatically. To mark the work's centenary, Covent Garden is at last presenting it in Russian, with a brilliant trio of principals: Yuri Masurok, whose blandly perfect voice suits Onegin's frigidity; Gabriela Benackova, whose Tatyana is a cowering mouse, brave only when singing to herself; and Nicolai Gedda as a fastidious, futilely honourable Lensky.

Films

Ian Hamilton

Dank You, Man

Just a Gigolo (AA) *Odeons, Chelsea and Swiss Cottage*
Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band (A) *Ritz, Leicester Square, ABCs Fulham Road and Bayswater, Classic 2*
Skip Tracer (AA) (*opening delayed*)

To the best of my admittedly uncertain knowledge, David Bowie was the first pop star to admit he is 'bisexual'. It is also my impression that he pre-dated the punk scene when announcing his allegiance to the National Front. His dearest wish, he confided at the time, was to become the first Nazi Prime Minister of Britain. It was presumably pioneering disclosures of this sort that encouraged David Hemmings to recruit Bowie for the main role in the German-financed *Just a Gigolo*, a film heavily staffed with perverts and fascists of one type or another, and just as heavily self-conscious in its pursuit of farcical bad taste.

The setting in which Bowie displays his blond hair and blue eyes is – can you imagine? – Berlin in the Twenties, and we are treated to endless shots of the pop star inspecting the various clichés of the period: sub-*Cabaret* cabaret items, grosz fatsos gorging themselves in irresponsibly packed cafés, Brechtian lieder sprouting in every alley, and – out of the corner of your ear – the first, faltering goose-steps of infant Nazis. Bowie plays the character of Paul von Pryzgodski (many a pun intended here, no doubt), a young Prussian who arrives at the trenches just as the Armistice is declared but still manages to cop it from the last explosion of the war. He comes round in a French hospital, where a De Sica style mayor (imagining the prone Bowie to be French) has collected a brass band, hampers of tricolours, medals and citations. Lovable chaos ensues when – mid-Marseillaise – the hero mumbles dank-yous. Bowie is thrown out of the hospital into scene three – the film, it should be said, is shot in scenes, about 33 in all – where he discovers that the homestead has slipped several yards downhill: Daddy had a stroke when peace was declared and hasn't spoken since, and Mummy is working in a Turkish bath. Little wonder that a deep moral blankness descends upon the once highly-motivated warrior.

And it is this blankness which enables the Bowie figure to be from here on the passive accepter of whatever happens to be thrown at him. He is roped into a mad proto-fascist gang led by David Hemmings (an excellent performance, this, with Hemmings consistently out-presencing his chosen star), wearily tolerates the advances of a succulent young Socialist (Sydne Rome) and eventually allows himself to join a team of gigolos run by the Baroness Marlene Dietrich. Personable but directionless young Prussians hire their built-for-war bodies to old crones, and we are meant to take their willingness to do this kind of work as some kind of reverberating emblem of the times.

And this is where the film is at its most uneasy: it wishes to mount farcical set-pieces and not seem solemn, but it is also seeking marks for historical alertness. Some of the set-pieces raise a modest laugh, but the jack-boot angle is neither menacing nor funny. Our role in the end is merely to follow the waxen Bowie's fruitless progress to the final joke: caught in cross-fire between Reds and Hitlerites, he becomes perhaps the first corpse of World War II – the Nazis, needing martyrs, give him a hero's funeral, and the sight of his swastika'd bier re-animates his comatose old dad. And this, sadly, has to be counted as one of the film's subtler thrusts.

Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band is a children's hour attempt to pictorialise the Beatles' famous disc, with the Bee Gees plus Peter Frampton doing the near-mime. Some amusement can be had from imagining the planning-conferences: the *Pepper* and *Road* albums mention about four proper names – Mr Kite, Mr Mustard, Dr Maxwell Edison, and the Hendersons – and not only have these to be turned into active inter-relating characters, but the songs in which their names appear have to be fitted – more or less sensibly – into the ensuing plot. Mr Kite is easy enough: he turns into George Burns, the mayor of a joy-and-love town called Heartland, where the original Sergeant Pepper band was raised. Mr Mustard becomes Frankie Howerd, a crazed real-estate operator who gets computered instructions from some robot Mr Big – destroy all joy and love is the general idea, and Howerd thus joins comic-strip battle with the radiantly pro-life Bee Gees, and with all the goodies that Heartland represents. Maxwell Edison is simply a mad doctor (played by Steve Martin) and he rightly gabbles the lyrics of his single song, since there really isn't *anything* in it for him.

Other ingenuities include a gooey heroine called Strawberry Fields who is the young love of Frampton's Billy Shears: trouble here when Strawberry (played by Sandy Farina) sings 'I'm going down to Strawberry Fields', and more trouble when the evidently drug-induced *I'm Fixing a Hole* is rephrased by George Burns as a confession of senility ('my mind is wandering', etc). Worst of all, perhaps, is the episode in which the Peppers carry the dead Strawberry's coffin to Boot Hill: the chosen ditty is 'Boy, you're gonna carry that weight, carry that weight a long time.' All in all, a slightly idiot concoction – never as inventive or jaunty as it so clearly strains to be. The songs, though (if you close your eyes), stand up quite well.

The synopsis of the Canadian Zale Dalen's *Skip Tracer* made it sound at least a neat idea: the adventures of a repossession-agent sick and heartless enough to doorstep his victims with copies of the *War Cry*, a baliff who actually enjoys unplugging colour TVs in the middle of Junior's favourite cartoon. But after some tough stuff early on, with the hero, remorseless in his pursuit of his agency's Man of the Year Award for the total numbers of lives ruined, there is a steady weakening into the realm of troubled conscience. The mean-eyed Collins (David Peterson) first gets stabbed by a disgruntled client, then warned by a distraught wife that if he doesn't lay off hubby there may be more blood on his hands. Need I go on? Still, some decent-enough low-budget street scenes – bags of grain, and amplified traffic noises – and Peterson himself has the makings of at least a side-kick in some future gangster epic.

Music

Andrew Clements

City Sounds

Music of Three Seasons by ANDREW PORTER
Chatto £12.50

Andrew Porter must be the envy of many British music critics. After nearly 20 years on the *Financial Times*, during which time he built up the paper's music coverage to be more detailed and comprehensive than that of any other London daily, he was lured to fame and fortune on the *New Yorker* – at first for the 1972-73 season only, but permanently from 1974. A collection of the pieces from his first year in New York was published in 1974 as *A Musical Season* – fresh, vivid impressions of the range and shortcomings of East Coast musical life which seem to revel in the freedom and ample space the *New Yorker* allows its contributors. *Music of Three Seasons* now carries the record forward to July 1977. Reading the 650-odd pages of unfailingly elegant prose it's easy to see why Porter was such an attractive proposition for an American weekly. The *New Yorker*'s readers are, I imagine, intelligent and well-informed but not especially musical; Porter's writing sparkles with literary erudition but wears its musical learning lightly.

Had he been a chamber-music or keyboard specialist, it's unlikely they would have been so keen to hire him. But opera is Porter's kingdom: as Verdi researcher he unearthed and assembled the complete version of Don Carlos; as translator he produced the English text of *The Ring* used in the current English National production. As a critic his opera reviews can seem humblingly authoritative, and the casual reader is more inclined to read such wide-ranging pieces than a discussion, say, of the relative merits of the Juilliard and Italian Quarters' Beethoven. The Metropolitan and City Operas provide the basic material for most of the opera reviews reprinted here, though Sarah Caldwell's Opera Company of Boston comes in for special praise and Porter's nose for the novelty leads him to cover an impressive range of student and small-scale independent productions.

At their best the reviews are an education.

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Porter's own homework is impeccable. The thorough grasp of all things Verdian one takes for granted, but he actually convinces you that he's read the whole of Bulwer Lytton's *Rienzi: The Last of the Roman Tribunes* before settling down to examine Wagner's libretto, that Stanislavsky's observations on producing *Eugene Onegin* inform his criticism of the visiting Bolshoi production, and that his misgivings about Raymond Leppard's edition of Monteverdi's *Ritorno d'Ulisse* are based on a thorough examination of the manuscript sources in Venice. This extends into contemporary opera. The weaknesses of Samuel Barber's *Antony and Cleopatra* are mercilessly exposed; Britten's *Death in Venice* is shown to improve on Thomas Mann's original. Even a work like Robert Wilson's and Philip Glass's *Einstein on the Beach*, so far removed from the conventional opera as to be seemingly refractory to the closely analytical Porter approach, actually benefits from it, byt demonstrating how the work is a symbiotic reinforcement of both Glass's and Wilson's talents. For anyone who has yet to experience *Einstein* it is an appetising introduction.

Sometimes, however, this learning runs away with itself. It becomes a very superior form of padding: the writing glitters and fizzes impressively around the subject but somehow never quite fastens on to the problems posed by the work or performance in hand. Particularly in discussing contemporary music it allows Porter to sit elegantly on the fence, pointing up and dissecting but never quite passing judgment. Thus the first performance of Elliott Carter's *A Symphony of Three Orchestras* prompts a piece that dwells more upon the work's literary relationship to Hart Crane's *The Bridge* and on Porter's own response to Crane and the New York it describes than upon Carter's achievement and the reasons for its being one of his most powerful pieces. Similarly, George Crumb's exotic confection of literary pretension and musical effect is meat and drink to Porter's approach; his critical faculties seem hypnotised by Crumb's incantations, whereas Messiaen's equally precious but far more original style in *From the Canyons to the Stars* is regarded as self-indulgent: '... a sweetness whereof a little more than a little can be by much too much'. Certainly the British music-lover interested in the contemporary American scene will find much of interest and valuable documentation among these pieces – although he is unlikely, if he knows his American music, to discover many new names. Porter's reports on premieres are usually those of the established American figures – besides Carter and Crumb they include Wuorinen, Sessions, Del Tredici and Druckman. The few reviews of orchestral and chamber concerts too are confined to the big names, to the Horovitzes, Soltis and Karajans. Few aspiring instrumentalists, it seems, are going to make Carnegie Hall on the strength of a review in the *New Yorker*.

But as a portrait of New York musical life it is, as Porter admits in his introduction, only partial. There is little about pre-classical music, he says, because it is usually so badly performed there; Massenet receives so much attention because his operas happened to be fashionable in New York in those three years. The concerts of the standard orchestral repertoire are as predictable and uninspired as they are in London; Porter is aware of this and crusades against it. It would also be nice to know the success rate of his other campaigns for improvements in the quality of New York musical life – for more informative programme notes, for opera librettos to be always on sale in opera-house foyers, for lieder recitals always to provide translations of the song texts, for authentic pipe organs to be installed in all the important concert halls. The influence of a *New Yorker* critic, one imagines, is far greater than that of his equivalents in this country. When Porter leaves the *New Yorker* in July to return to the *Financial Times*, it seems quite possible that he will have made a lasting impression on the city's concert-going mores.

Sport

Russell Davies

Striker Light

While the deblanchfloration of Northern Ireland is not a deed that will much impress world assessors and continental maestri, there is every reason for us at home to hope that the England team is really looking up. I mean really really. How happily incautious it is to put the national team out without a midfield 'destroyer'. Gone is the bunch of Cherries that used to dangle in the deep. Hurray. Certain improvements could however be made. For a start, I cannot see any point in alienating Shilton by bringing in Clemence as goalkeeper. The famous 'understanding' between the Liverpool players at the back is much too debatable an asset. The real man any current England goalkeeper needs to have an understanding with is Watson, and here Shilton is just as well qualified as his Liverpool rival. Besides, it must soon be time to reduce the Liverpool contingent in the team by bidding a graceful farewell to Hughes. His lopey, dog-paddling stride has always made him look like a man who's trying to catch up; but now it's getting serious. Every defence is caught square once in a while, and the time is very near when Hughes, like Moore before him, will be robbed, passed and subjected to one of those long, vain and embarrassing chases back through an empty England half. He won't catch up. Better that he should depart as unblushingly as he came.

A man I feel more strongly about replacing, actually, is Latchford. With a 30-goals-a-season award behind him, and two goals in his latest international, this player would seem to have grounds for calling any man a lunatic who considered giving him the bum's rush. All I can say is that he has never begun to convince me that he is the right player for the England shirt he fills so, well, fully. True, my objections to Latchford are culpably aesthetic: I just hate the kind of goals he gets, those grubby little squirts and bustling prods and nods in the six-yard area. It is usual to give a player who commonly scores in this way some credit for being 'in the right place at the right time', but in Latchford's case it looks a good deal like old-fashioned goal-hanging. A defence that protected its flanks competently would not have given him a sniff of the chances he took against Northern Ireland; and on the other hand, the notion of making his own chances doesn't come naturally to Latchford. Over the seasons, one has seen many a cunning chipped ball from midfield drop over a full-back's head into dangerous space, only to find Latchford too slow of thought (and none too adept at snapping his heavy frame into life) to profit by the occasion. So the point is not that one would, selfishly as it were, *like* Latchford to score more spectacular goals: but that one knows he would *have* to score more spectacular goals, against decent European defences, in order to score at all.

The more I see of Jimmy Greenhoff – and I know it's a bit late now – the more I wish we had perceived his quality years ago. I have only very lately realised how much I enjoy seeing him play. He has always looked physically efficient (one does not have to be in Latchford-bashing mood to observe that some successful strikers would benefit by the acquisition of this asset), and you can tell by the way he tenses over the ball that he believes he is going to do something good with it. The way Greenhoff holds his long-sleeved arms out like parentheses at his side is often strongly reminiscent of Denis Law; and this balancing posture is by no means the only resemblance. In the penalty area, he has the same knack of shooting, when required, absolutely dead straight and hard in a rising trajectory, with a sort of miraculously controlled toe-punt; he also has a way of making apparently outrageous attempts on goal which, when you think about them or see them again in replay, turn out not to be excessively or eccentrically flamboyant at all, but perfectly legitimate applications of an acrobatic talent.

Greenhoff's bicycle kick in Monday night's FA Cup game at Old Trafford was a technically perfect demonstration of that extravagant art, and what's more, it was the best thing to do in the circumstances. But I can't, off-hand, think of any particular range or angle of approach that would be likely to find Greenhoff at a loss. I always reckon the reliable trade-mark of a good striker is the ability to seize, with relish rather than shock or dread, the opportunity to burst away from a flat-footed defender (Hughes?), head for the open goal, and beat the keeper without giving anyone on the terraces time to worry lest control be lost and the chance smothered and wasted. These things Greenhoff does well. He can be relied on to 'stick it away', and the phrase is better suited by far to his direct method than to the carefully predictable shimmying of most of his contemporaries.

Alas, Greenhoff is an unlucky veteran. He is serving out his time, and it is to be hoped that the warm blasts of adulation at Old Trafford will lay his ambitions contentedly to rest. Looking for old heads – any intelligent heads – on young shoulders, the nation meanwhile waits to see whether anything will come of the gloriously over-priced Trevor Francis. Nobody is yet worth a million pounds to a football club (unless he's a besotted tycoon director) but the publicity might be, I suppose. As for the footballing skill, I imagine I am not alone among Britons in having very largely forgotten what Francis can do. Even before this gelid winter deprived us of all but the odd squint at Watford and snatch of Shrewsbury, Francis was a badly injured player at an unfashionable club. Most of us have seen him only a few times and our opinion has not been much broadened by the BBC's obsession with a single clip: Francis

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turning a couple of backs inside out on the left edge of the area and scoring low inside the near post. It is an excellent, worked-for goal, but something about the fall-away slackness of the opposition gives it the look of park football, exhibition stuff. Unfair to say that – but then I have irrational and therefore unfair doubts about Francis.

Could it be that he is too well brought up? Is there perhaps still an inbuilt class element in the game, grinding the best only out of those who, like (pre-eminently, and marvellously) Kevin Keegan, are workers of the world? Francis, to me, already has the glossy look of the junior executive. My fear is that the promotion ladder that stood ahead of him has turned, all too conveniently, into a nice smooth labour-saving escalator. I hope he doesn't arrive at the top floor having forgotten what his legs are for.

Television

Julian Barnes

Strong Meat

Back in the coarsely thrilling days of my childhood viewing, when Dale Robertson and Ty Hardin symbolised respectively the left and right hands of Good, there was one actor who gallantly, irredeemably and doggedly symbolised Bad. He was called Steve Plytas: a plump, jowly, sweaty man with an East European accent and a manner of suspiciously injured, hand-spreading innocence. Whenever the children's serials called for a shady jeweller with import-export connections, a child kidnapper, a Slavic heavy, or a straightforward thief, murderer or blackmailer, Steve Plytas always got the job. I haven't spotted him on the screen for years, but he turned up again this week on *World in Action* (Granada) in the role of Lord Kagan. Just the right part; playing a 63-year-old garment manufacturer hiding out in Tel Aviv, Plytas used all his old skill: one hand to open the closet door and lift up the bedspread, and the other to clap over the camera's lens.

It was a tough, aggressive performance, full of chutzpah, with unfettered praise both for his own export performances – the King of Iraq was apparently hanged wearing a Gannex ('We didn't publicise the fact') – and for Harold Wilson: 'A first-class brain, a big man, to him a man is a man is a man . . . He is a very wonderful person, that's all I can say.' 'Kagan' as a character, though, was helped by the weak casting of the British-detective part: Michael Gillard was too easily thrown by his suspect's feisty reactions. When asked whether he deserved a knighthood, Plytas replied, 'that's not for me to say – do *you* think I deserved it?' – to which Gillard feebly responded 'That's not for me to say' when he obviously meant 'Not on your bloody life'. Kagan frequently rephrased questions ('If you are asking . . . ' his reply would begin), and yet it didn't seem evasive, merely a necessary preliminary clarification. Naturally the interview didn't uncover much – apart from the tough nature of the suspect himself – or force any significant admissions, except perhaps in the final minutes. As Kagan declined to answer question after question about 'The Case', there was a rhythmic background slapping noise. It wasn't, as you might have thought, the suspect being softened up offscreen by Gillard's number two, but a sweaty hand beating up and down in nervous irritation on the arm of a chair. It was that familiar sound of a man failing to buy an air ticket to a country where he is wanted for questioning.

Jonathan Miller's history of medicine by metaphor, *The Body in Question* (BBC-2), came to an end this week with the Doctor red to the wrists in the guts of a half-dissected corpse. He warned us beforehand that an autopsy was 'neither frightening nor repulsive – simply a necessary part of our medical knowledge'; but even so the sight was, literally, strong meat. The corpses most of us see are those kitted out by undertakers, made as close as possible to what they've just stopped being. This corpse, naked, lividly discoloured and deprived of maquillage, had been ripped open like some burst suitcase off a Heathrow carousel: the vital organs, half unpacked, slopped down its sides like pathetic lost possessions. Miller, in a bright green plastic apron, delved into it like an avuncular pork butcher: squeezing away at bits of heart, chuckling as his fellow-autopsist sliced through the liver like a Top Breeder about to Recommend It.

The two of them, incongruously at ease with their material, looked for all the world like a pair of Orton delinquents maniacally in search of swallowed treasure. Later on, we saw a puma being anaesthetised – though fortunately it didn't get cut up. In between – as throughout this series – we heard a lot of good sense being delivered from an illuminatingly unfamiliar angle. Miller ended by limiting the claimed historical benefits of medicine (for example, it had no noticeable effect on the size of the population until the 1930s) and yet at the same time wisely endorsing its main thrusts: this was welcome at a time when people too willingly believe that, just as the mad are all really sane, so the sick are all really healthy.

The only logical place left for Miller to go after the morgue was where *Credo* (LWT) went this week: into the matter of Reincarnation. Were a pair of 20-year-old Scarborough twins, it asked, the reincarnations of their two elder sisters, who had been killed by a swerving car a year before the twins were born? Well, what do you think, panel? The main evidence was that the girls could 'remember' things only their dead sisters could have known; also that birthmarks, methods of gripping a pen, and elder-younger protectiveness were identically reproduced by the living siblings. As is usual in such cases, there were facts and happenings which seemed to far exceed the normal laws of coincidence, and at the same time a gaping lack of major persuasive evidence: an American psychiatrist-researcher concluded, 'I'd give it an intermediate rating.' What no one seemed to ask was what exactly the claimed reincarnations could be said to consist of. 'Both parents are convinced that their dead daughters have come back to life, so there is no sadness when they revisit the graves.' But what had come back? Two identical personalities? Identical bodies? Clearly not. Two recycled souls? If so, why announce their return in such an ambiguous manner? (Maybe souls have a sense of humour – or a love of appearing on TV.) Why announce themselves at all?

There was an unexpected revenant on *Read All About It* (BBC-1), the show which in its second run under Ronald Harwood has so well responded to this column's flick of the whip that the panel now almost always consists of people who know something about books. I tuned in this week with (I confess) the slightly malicious expectation of a confidently-dropped clanger or two, since one of the guests was the excitable Director of the British Museum, David Wilson. Last time he was on he distinguished himself with a hysterical attack on the 'distasteful', 'unsavoury' and 'really rather nasty' memoirs of Christopher Isherwood. This time, alas, there were no foul and beastly writers of this sort to set him off; but it was good to have his opinion that the suffragettes 'went over the top', and also to hear that Dr Wilson is the only man in England who believes that Amis is pronounced with a short *a*.

The other book news of the week is that a new series of *Word for Word* is on the way – which should send everyone scurrying to sign up for Monday-night evening classes in Peruvian basket-weaving and home gas-fitting. But this column's own Deep Throat down in Lime Grove adds a gloss to the news: Vicky Payne – winner of the NS's 1978 Titanic Award – will not, we understand, be featuring next time round. This isn't, of course, an occasion for ill-bred celebration; merely for sad reflection on those who picked her in the first place. In time, no doubt, the girl will surely re-emerge in her proper slot; so until then, let's all preserve a proper silence.

Weekend Competition

No 2553 **Set by Stocky Jules**

Yevgeni Yevtushenko's wife recently had a baby; whereupon the poet, who had been present at the event, went down on the delivery-room floor and wrote a poem. Whatever can it have been like? Post-partural odes, please, by this or any other living poet of your choice. 16 lines maximum; entries in by 2 March.

Result of No 2550 Set by Ms de Meaner

Late at night, Edna O'Brien writes unposted letters to the celebrated. We asked you to intercept them.

Report **by P.C. 49**

In the matter of Comp No 2550, the statements of the parties having been submitted to

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for a routine bit of eye-over, just in case
: or two of you gents fancied himself for a
of how's-your-father concerning the ques-
ı of blasphemy, obscenity or defamation. I
'e to report, and I can assure you that this
ɛs me no pleasure at all to do so, that the
ıp folder this week was ever so far from
Bulging it was not. Station house pro-
ures re theft and burglary were immedi-
ly implemented, but a thorough search of
premises revealed that the deficiency was
: purely to a sending-in shortfall on the part
you good citizens. I trust that this gentle
ıinder will ensure that it won't happen
in. A coroner's apiece, and I'd better warn
ı that if you don't get cracking some of that
ıaining Bisquit Cognac is going to be fall-
off the back of a lorry pretty smartish.

ırest Kevin, O my brown-eyed, smooth-skinned,
:k-haired boy, when you come for me, my soul
sing of fine, wide, green spring mornings, and
heart will pulse to deep visions of dark,
ıask-scented, bat-swooping sunsets. O my sweet
ılish Leprechaun! ours shall be the world, and
the little people to people it. Let me be Love's
Captain, Passion's Ancient Mariner; let me
ł the single tiller of our twin destinies ...

ır Mrs O'Brien, Most of my groupies are a bit
'e direct than this. I suggest you write a book.

TIM HOPKINS

r Richard Ingrams, Don't I love it when you put
eye on some of the City trash. The way you do
jax the likes of them reminds me of the cock-
s my old tiddly Nanny used to kill and draw
ry Saturday for Sunday's dinner and me always
ing the Pope's nose. Lord have mercy on us
ıe of them quality folk wouldn't give the likes of
. cup of buttermilk. They'd as soon do pooly on
as help you with a rasher to fry or a kreel of turf
the fire, bad cess to them. And doesn't my Aunt
die love the Colonel Mad with his raking up the
:k as if he'd walked a ploughed field? We'd as
n die without a priest as miss the Eye's tasty bits
ıossip with the writs flying about like banshees
the bog.

GERRY HAMILL

ır Denis, Well, sweet Jesus, I felt like writing you
letter. 'Twas around eleven o'clock last night.
ɔther eyening. The ground outside darkening
like an overcooked fruitcake. Well, that's the way I come to be writing this to you, if you know what I mean. Know! How could you? I wanted to ask you if it was lonely being the Chancellor. And Christ, you are an eejit I said to myself, if you want to know. Question of needing to send you a letter. I felt like it, I can't tell you how I felt like it. Imagine it. And God Almighty, I'm expecting a reply from you all right. *Yours, Edna.*

Dear Edna, Thank you for writing. You know, if we write a letter, it can't be all that bad for us, can it? But frankly, I'm not lonely, because I live with my wife. And funnily enough, she is also called Edna, and writes as well. I have read all of her book, although none of yours; I did see your film *The Inebriate Woman,* however, and, you know, I liked it, *Quite honestly, Denis.*

BILL GREENWELL

Johnny Darlin', It was Baba that dared me, so you'll have to blame this effusion (none drippier, I fear) on her. With any luck you won't even be able to unscramble my writing – the nuns was always going on at me about it – and that's just as well, because after ogling you avidly through seventeen consecutive performances at the *Palais de Luxe* at Ballycrumpet (the ritziest fleapit in County Clare) I've not only got the hots but am bug-eyed to boot. Like most simple country girls I'm fond of horses and if you ever come to Ireland can promise you a ride you'll never forget ... As I'm too shy to sign my name, please address any reply to my married sister, a Mrs O'Brien.

Dear Mrs O'Brawn, Thank you very much for sending me some of your pubic hair/underwear/love/good wishes. You are obviously a very sweet, sincere, wonderful and lovely person – just the sort of sweet, sincere, wonderful and lovely person that I should like for my girl/secretary/sweetheart/wife/mother. Take care. Have a nice day, *Sincerely, John Travolta.*

KIT CARPENTER

Tony Miles

Chess

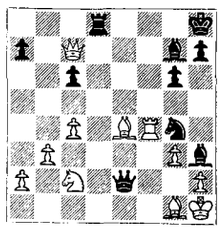
No 120 The Hoogoven's Tournament

The 41st Annual Hoogoven's tournament at Wijk-aan-Zee was won by the Russian Lev Polugaevsky with 7½ points out of 11. I shared second place with Wif Andersson (Sweden) and Genna Sosonko (Holland) on 6½, with Hübner (W. Germany), Hort (Czechoslovakia) and Timman (Holland) a further ½ point behind.

Despite a lot of enterprising play the tournament produced an unusually high proportion of draws – indeed, the first four players all went through undefeated. The decisive encounter turned out to be between the eventual winner and the Dutch GM Jan Timman. Polugaevsky was in some trouble from the opening, but defended ingeniously and then out-gunned Timman in the tactics.

White: J Timman Black: L Polugaevsky

1.P-Q4, N-KB3; 2.P-QB4, P-K3; 3.N-KB3, P-QN3; 4.P-KN3, B-N2; 5.B-N2, B-N5ch; 6.B-Q2, B-K2; 7.N-B3, 0-0; 8.0-0, N-R3; 9.N-K5, BxB; 10.KxB, Q-N1; 11.P-K4, Q-N2; 12.Q-B3, P-B3; 13.KR-K1, N-QN5; 14.QR-B1, P-Q3; 15.N-Q3, NxN; 16.QxN, P-QR3; 17.P-Q5, BPxP; 18.BPxP, P-QN4; 19.P-QR3, QR-B1, 20.B-B4, R-B5; 21.PxP, PxP; 22.P-B3, R-Q1; 23.KR-Q1, N-Q2; 24.P-N3, R5-B1; 25.N-K2, N-B4; 26.Q-N1, P-N5; 27.B-K3, PxP; 28.P-QN4, N-Q2; 29.N-B4, N-B1; 30.Q-N3, P-Q4; 31.KPxP, QxP; 32.QxQ, BxQ; 33.QPxP, RxR; 34.RxR, P-R7; 35.N-Q5, R-Q1; 36.P-K7, RxN; 37.RxR, P-R8=Q; 38.P-K8=Q, Q-R7ch; 39.B-Q2, BxB; 40.R-K5, B-N5ch; 41.R-K2, Q-Q4; 42.P-R4, P-QR4; 43.R-K4, B-Q3; 44.R-K2, P-R3; 45.P-N4, Q-Q5; 46.P-R5, B-B4; 47.K-N3, Q-N8ch; 48.K-B4, B-Q3ch; 49.K-K4, Q-B4; 50.Q-R8, Q-B5ch; 51.K-K3, B-B4ch; 52.K-Q2, Q-R7ch; 53.K-Q1, Q-N8ch; 54.K-Q2, Q-N7ch; 55.K-Q1, Q-N6ch; 56.K-Q2, B-N5ch; 57.K-B1, Q-Q6; 0-1



Problem 120

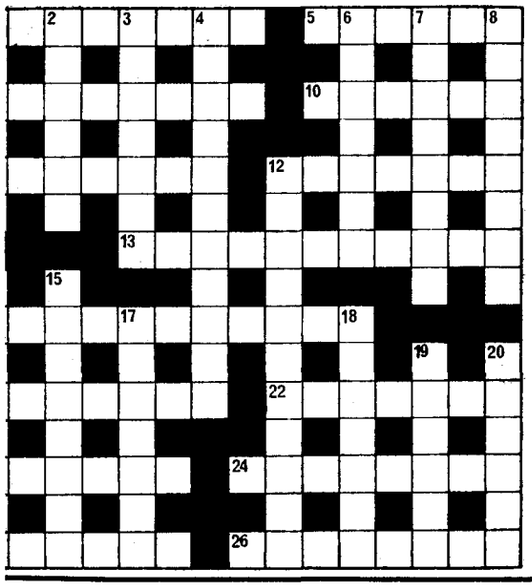
Black to play. How should the game go? Answers to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked not later than 28 February.

Solution to Problem 118

Bad. Black wins by 1 . . . Q-N3ch! 2.QxQ, RxRch; and 3 . . . PxQ. Instead White has a draw with 1.RxB, RxQ; 2.R-R8ch, R-K1; 3.R(N)-N8.

Weekend Crossword 1293

IZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions ned. Entries to Crossword 1293, New Statesman, Great nstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 27 February.



ACROSS

1 Birds look brilliant among the flowers (8).
5 I stay with a male in the same place (6).
9 A little bit is kept back by employers to provide clothing (8).
10 The international was not transferred (6).
11 Is ambitious, as holding something very high (7).
12 Female birds take a male into their enclosures (7).
13 Tiny container used by farmer (11).
16 Singer dealing in foreign weapons (11).
21 Win back one's right with ill-concealed malice (7).
22 Someone else takes over when a throne collapses (7).
23 Giving credit is an afterthought for this food (6).
24 Insolence on greeting will keep the chaps away (8).
25 Drooped, being gloomy about what is laid back (6).
26 The strange one has become most annoyed (8).

DOWN

1 Two o'clock cricketer (6).
2 The company enters inducements to secure exclusive items (6).
3 Persuades one that Conway is surrounded by water rising (7).
4 Ventures to salute the capital (11).
6 Courage sets a born artist against a party (7).
7 Stretches where the region terminates (8).
8 Over a score cars are needed by government department (8).
12 A biological process sets one between vote and people (11).
14 A moment in writing used by printers (8).
15 Punishment performed with a ruler by a graduate in science (8).
17 Gad about in wild parties (7).
18 The one who wakes up Gateshead is a malcontent (7).
19 Incline to set aside (6).
20 Minister who makes unusual trips round the East (6).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1291

S	W	A	L	L	O	W	S		S	T	A	T	E	S
A		T		O		H			R		E		T	
F	L	O	O	D	L	I	T		P	U	R	S	E	R
A		N		E		T		D	E		T		A	
R	E	E	L	S		E	X	E	C	R	A	T	E	D
I		S		T		F		N			U		D	
			T	O	W	E	R	O	F	B	A	B	E	L
S		S		N		A		M		A		E		E
C	O	N	C	E	R	T	P	I	T	C	H			
A		A				H		N		C		C		V
B	A	T	H	S	H	E	B	A		H	E	A	V	E
B		C		E		R		T		A		N		R
A	C	H	I	N	G		P	I	N	N	A	C	E	S
R		E		S			O		T		A		E	
D	A	S	H	E	D		I	N	T	E	R	N	E	D

Prizewinners to No 1291

D. T. Pollard (London SE26)
A. Greenspoon (Ann Arbor)
Susan Deacon (Norfolk)

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APPOINTMENTS

CHILD POVERTY ACTION GROUP

Director

Following Frank Field's resignation after ten years, the Group is seeking a new Director. CPAG and its staff of eleven work as a team to eliminate family poverty. The Director is responsible to an executive committee, and will be expected to pursue its aims and develop the Group's work. Salary of not less than £7,500 negotiable according to experience and qualifications and subject to annual review.

For further particulars write to: **The Secretary, Child Poverty Action Group, 1 Macklin Street, London WC2.** Closing date **2 March 1979.**

THE POLYTECHNIC Huddersfield

Division of Law, Faculty of Business Ref: ACA/336

HEAD OF DIVISION—PRINCIPAL LECTURER

(£7,047 - £7,818 (Bar) - £8,844)

The Polytechnic, in widening its academic base, is to establish a Division of Law. This challenging post requires a candidate who possesses the dedication and application that will be needed to establish a successful Division and to develop its academic contribution to the Polytechnic teaching to the point where it would warrant regrading to the status of a Department.

We therefore seek applications from qualified lawyers to Head the Division, preferably with experience gained in a legal practice or perhaps from an industrial or educational background. The Division will not only service existing courses within the Faculty, but will also develop its own degree and other teaching programmes.

Further details and application forms, which should be returned by **1 March 1979** from **the Establishment Office, The Polytechnic, Queensgate, Huddersfield HD1 3DH. (Telephone 0484 22288 Ext 2225).**

AGE CONCERN

ASSISTANT PRESS OFFICER

AGE CONCERN ENGLAND requires an Assistant Press Officer to join a busy press office at its headquarters in Mitcham. This new post will involve assisting the Press Officer to promote the Age Concern Movement through all sections of the media. This is an ideal post for a keen individual wishing to enter this field. Good written and spoken English, as well as an ability to type, are essential.

Salary on scale £2,963-£3,471, 4 weeks holidays per annum, contributory pension scheme and subsidised canteen.

Further details and application form from **Administrative Secretary, Age Concern England, Bernard Sunley House, 60 Pitcairn Road, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 3LL**

Closing date for applications **2 March 1979.**

STELLA FISHER BUREAU is now recruiting Secretaries of good education and experience at salaries to £5,000 p.a. Stella Fisher Bureau (emp. agcy) 110 Strand, WC2. 836 6644 (open Sats 10 a.m.-12.30 p.m.).

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TEA, A CHAT AND A JOB at the Winifred Johnson Office Staff Bureau, 118 New Bond Street, W1 (opp. Fenwick's). 493 3005.

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Please write to: **Director of Studies, Sociedade Brasileira de Cultura Inglesa, Rua Maranhao 416, 01240 Sao Paulo - SP Brazil.**

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PROBATION OFFICERS

Applications are invited for the post of

General Secretary/Chief Negotiator

Present salary £6,582-£7,095 (including Outer London weighting) is under review.

For 68 years NAPO has been the Professional Association of the Probation Service. It is now also the registered independent trade union representing its 4,500 members. The Probation Service has just over 5,000 Probation Officers for whom we negotiate salaries and Conditions of Service and 600 ancillary workers for whom we are seeking negotiating rights.

Our increasing interest in trade union activity means that our new General Secretary will need to combine the skills of a speaker on professional matters, meeting Government Departments and other influential bodies, with those of a trade union leader acting as our spokesman at the Joint Negotiating Committee for the Probation Service. Some experience of trade union affairs will be an advantage.

The successful applicant must also lead the small team of permanent staff based at Thornton Heath where the activities of the Association carried out by our Branches and Standing Committees are co-ordinated.

A job specification is available on request.

If you want to discuss the job informally telephone Murray Bruggen, Chairman of NAPO, whom you may reach on one of these numbers 01-689 1116; 0282 23310; 0772 21217.

Applications with the names of 2 referees to: **NAPO, (NSt), 1st Floor, Ambassador House, Brigstock Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey CR4 7JG.**

Closing date 5 March 1979.

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Industrial Relations Services

**The Editor,
Industrial Relations Review & Report,
67 Maygrove Road, London NW6 2EJ.**

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Official Fellowship in Law

Applications are invited from men and women for an Official Fellowship in Law, to be taken up, if possible, from October, 1979. A University Lectureship (CUF) may be associated with the post. Further particulars available from **the Senior Tutor, Wadham College, Oxford OX1 3PN.** Closing date for applications **9 March 1979.**

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

SENIOR LECTURER AND LECTURER IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Applications are invited from suitably qualified persons for the above posts. Appointment, with earliest possible effect, will be made, according to qualifications and experience, on the scale R8,460 x 360 - 9,900 x 450 - R11,250 (for Senior Lecturer), and R6,300 x 360 - R9,180 (for Lecturer), plus in both cases an allowance of 19.9% of basic salary p.a.

A special interest in one or more of the following fields would be an additional recommendation: quantitative administrative methods, government administration in South Africa, comparative development administration, public personnel management.

Applicants should submit a curriculum vitae, stating present salary, research interests and publications, and the names and addresses of three referees.

Further information should be obtained from the Registrar, Room 10, University of Cape Town, Private Bag 24, Rondebosch, C.P. 7700, to whom applications should be submitted not later than 31 March 1979 (late applications may be accepted). Academic enquiries may be addressed to Professor J. F. Beekman, Head of the Department of Public Administration.

The University's policy is not to discriminate in the appointment of staff or the selection of students on the grounds of sex, race, religion or colour. Further information on the implementation of this policy is obtainable from the Registrar.

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seeks a

General Secretary

to oversee its work and co-ordinate and promote its campaign against world poverty.

Full details and application form available from:

WAR ON WANT, 467 CALEDONIAN ROAD, LONDON N7 9BE.

Closing date for application 12 March 1979.

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON
New Zealand

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

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Candidates should have good academic qualifications in the social sciences and experience in organising and presenting industrial relations education through lectures, short courses, seminars and other types of programmes. Experience in the practice of industrial relations and knowledge of New Zealand system, while not essential, are desirable. Normal or limited tenure (3 years). From 1 January 1980.

CLOSING DATE: 31 March 1979.

SALARIES: The salary scale for Senior Lecturers is NZ$14,983 to $17,145 p.a., where there is a bar, then NZ$18,665 p.a. Fares paid to New Zealand.

CONDITIONS OF APPOINTMENT: Prospective applicants should obtain conditions of appointment and method of application from the Association of Commonwealth Universities (Appts), 36 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PF.

UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX

SECOND CHAIR IN PHILOSOPHY

Extended closing date

Applications are invited for the second Chair in Philosophy from candidates in any major area of Philosophy, whether or not it is represented in the Department of Philosophy.

Applications (12 copies, quoting ref. AG/58/NS) should be sent to the Registrar, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester CO4 3SQ, from whom further particulars are obtainable, not later than 15 March 1979.

Please note that the closing date has been extended owing to advertising difficulties.

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For further details please telephone DAVID POWELL or STEVE HENSON on 01-485 0881.

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The University seeks to appoint a Head of the Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies to succeed Professor Frank Fenner, CMG, MBE, FAA, FRS, who will retire at the end of 1979.

The Centre is designed to advance research in resource and environmental studies, to provide postgraduate training including a Master's degree by coursework, and to seek solutions to problems of resource and environmental management. The present academic staff, including the Director, comprises five senior tenured staff and seven research fellows, drawn from both social and natural science disciplines.

The Director is responsible through the Vice-Chancellor to the University Council for the operation and development of the Centre and for its administration and financial management. The Director's most important role is that of academic leadership; he will be expected to lead and co-ordinate multidisciplinary research studies within the Centre, taking a key role in developing the major projects that will at any time occupy a substantial part of the time of all staff of the Centre. His professional background may be in any field appropriate to the Centre. He should have a broad interest in and understanding of resource and environmental studies, and should if possible have had experience in leading multi-disciplinary team projects.

The Director will also hold a Chair in the University. The term of office as Director will be a matter for agreement with the University but is likely to be for five to seven years with the possibility of extension for a further period. Appointment as professor is until retiring age, i.e. the end of the year in which the professor reaches the age of 65 years, wth the option of retiring at any time after age 60.

Anyone interested in being considered for this appointment is asked to write in confidence to the Registrar, PO Box 4, Canberra, ACT 2600, Australia, from whom further information may be obtained.

Reasonable appointment expenses are paid. Superannuation benefits are available for applicants who are eligible to contribute. Assistance with housing is provided for an appointee from outside Canberra.

The University reserves the right not to make an appointment or to make an appointment by invitation at any time.

ADMINISTRATOR required for Free Representation Unit. Voluntary group representing claimants before welfare and industrial tribunals. 25 hours per week (10-2 Monday-Friday and evening meetings). £2,400 per annum. Sole responsibility for running office. Typing and knowledge of tribunals desirable but not essential. Job description on request. Apply by 23 February to: FRU, 3 Middle Temple Lane, Temple, London EC4. Including CV. 'Phone 01-353 3697.

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Application forms are available from: **NUBE, Sheffield House, Portsmouth Road, Esher, Surrey.** Completed forms must reach NUBE not later than **16 March 1979.**

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Salary £5,440 p.a. (higher if qualifications exceptional) + £220 rising to £7,295 p.a. Plus unconsolidated allowance of £461 p.a. Salaries under review. Relocation expenses considered.
Telephone or write immediately for application form, enclosing addressed envelope, quoting reference No. 1055/NS to **Appointments Department, BBC, London W1A 1AA. Telephone: 01-580 4468 Ext. 4619.**

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There will be nineteen awards varying in amount from £50 to £500.

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David Hicks, MBE, BA, MBIM, Director of Education, THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION, Dartmouth House, 37 Charles Street, London W1X 8AB.

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Meetings —continued from page 236

'RELIGIOUS EDUCATION', talk by John White presenting the humanist view. London Young Humanists, 13 Prince of Wales Terr., W8. Sun. 18 Feb. 7.30 p.m. 30p.

SHAW SOCIETY. Fri. 23 Feb. 6.30 p.m. Social & Quiz on a Shavian theme. Coffee & refreshments. Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq., London WC1.

NO EXTRADITION for Astrid Proll. Public meeting 20 February, St Pancras Hall, Euston Road, NW1. 7.30 p.m. Speakers include Jo Richardson MP, Tony Gifford, speaker from State Research, Larry Grant, and speaker from Friends of Astrid Proll. Music/poetry.

THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for pamphlets, book list, programme of activities. Public Talk Sun. 18 Feb. 8 p.m. 'The Mystery of Death'. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2.

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Publications

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16 February 1979

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ROYAL COURT, 730 1745. Prevs from 22 Feb. 8 p.m. Opens 27 Feb. 7 p.m. subs eves 8 p.m. 'The London Cuckolds' by Edward Ravenscroft.

TOWER, *Canonbury Place, N1.* Stoppard's 'Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead' till Sun., then Tues.-Sat. at 7.30. Booking: 226 5111 (Mon 6.30-8, Tues-Sats 2.15-8).

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Entertainments

ROUND HOUSE, 267 2564. An evening with Yevtushenko. 'The Face behind the Face'. Suns 18 & 25 Feb. 7.30 p.m.

SCREEN ON THE HILL 435 3366 (opp. Belsize Park Tube). 'Remeber My Name' (AA). 3.45, 5.30, 7.15, 9.15.

Meetings

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON, Gower St, WC1E 6BT. *Lunch Hour Lectures*, 1.20 to 2. Admission free. 20 Feb. 'Why Read Kafka?' by Professor M. W. Swales.

LABOUR AND EQUALITY. Fabian Seminar. 10 a.m. to 4.30, Saturday, 24 February. Chairman: Peter Townsend. Speakers: Paul Ormerod, Patricia Hewitt, Vincent Cable, Malcolm Wicks, David Webster, Nicholas Bosanquet, Robert Taylor. Venue: Mary Sumner House, 24 Tufton Street, London SW1. £2 at door or in advance from 11 Dartmouth Street, SW1. 01-930 3077.

CENTRAL LONDON FABIAN SOCIETY. Ian Wilson, prosp. candidate Southgate. 'Problems of Education Today' 7.30 Wed. 21 Feb. 5 Tavistock Place, WC1. All welc.

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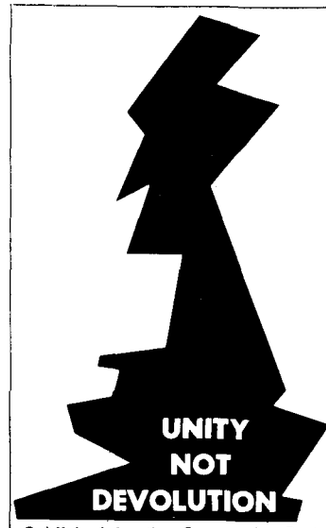
Yevgeny YEVTUSHENKO will be at **MOWBRAYS BOOKSHOP**, 28 Margaret Street, Oxford Circus, London W1, on Tuesday, 20 February, from 5.15 to 6.30 p.m. to sign and read from his new book **THE FACE BEHIND THE FACE** (Boyars, £2.25). If you cannot come, telephone 01-580 2812 to reserve a copy.



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